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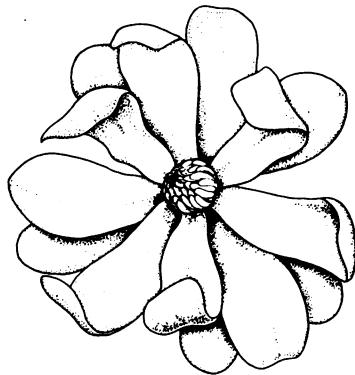
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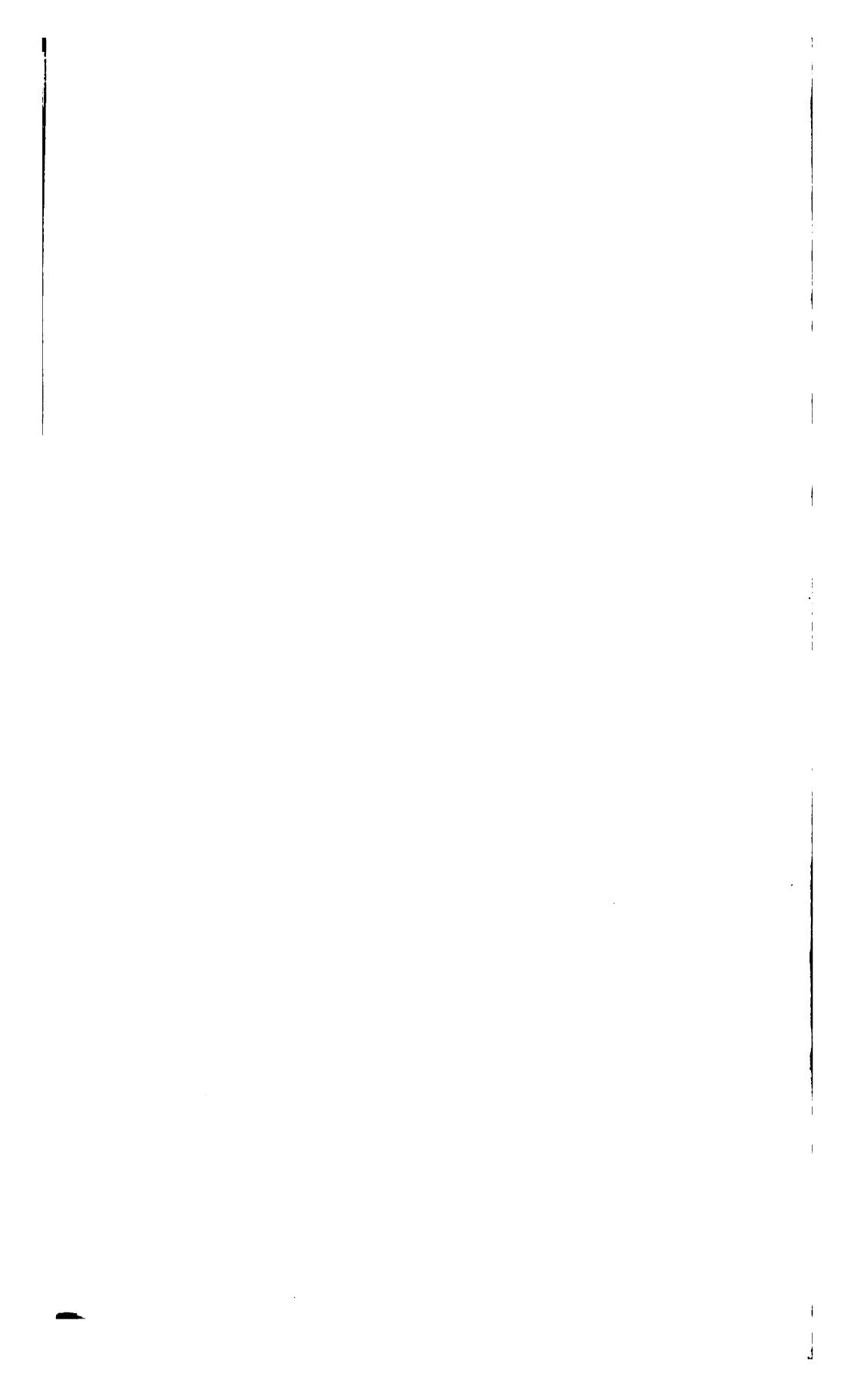
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HARLAN PARK,

BOSTON, MASS.

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

OF THE

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,

FOR THE CITY OF BOSTON,

FOR THE

YEAR 1880.



BOSTON:

ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL, CITY PRINTERS,

No. 39 ARCH STREET.

1881.



[DOCUMENT 12 — 1881.]

CITY OF BOSTON.



SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF

CHARLES H. DALTON.

W.M. GRAY, JR.

HENRY LEE.

S OF THE
PARKS,

O.

COMMISSIONERS OF PARKS.

of Boston:—

, entitled "An
ear the City of
Commissioners
ake to the City
or the preced-
their receipts

and expenditures.

In accordance therewith the Commissioners have the honor
to submit the following report:—

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.

I.

Receipts and Expenditures of the Department for the year
1880.

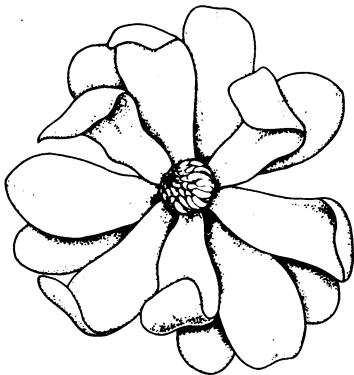
BACK BAY PARK LAND ACCOUNT.

Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1879	\$26,309 10
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EXPENDITURES.

Amount paid for land purchased in 1880	\$3,570 73
Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1880	22,738 37
	\$26,309 10

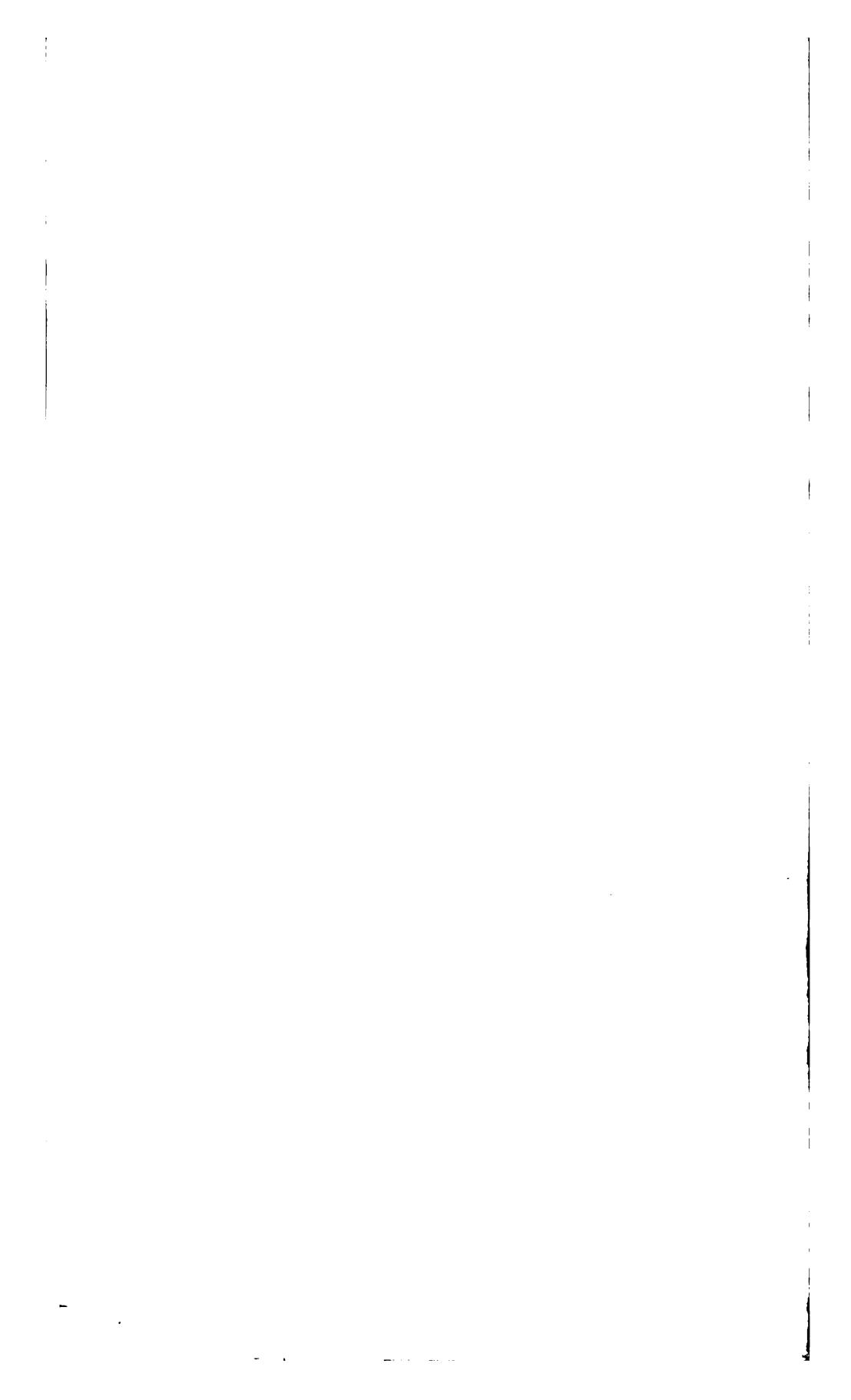
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HARLAN P. K.

BEACON HILL,

BOSTON,

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

OF THE

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,

FOR THE CITY OF BOSTON,

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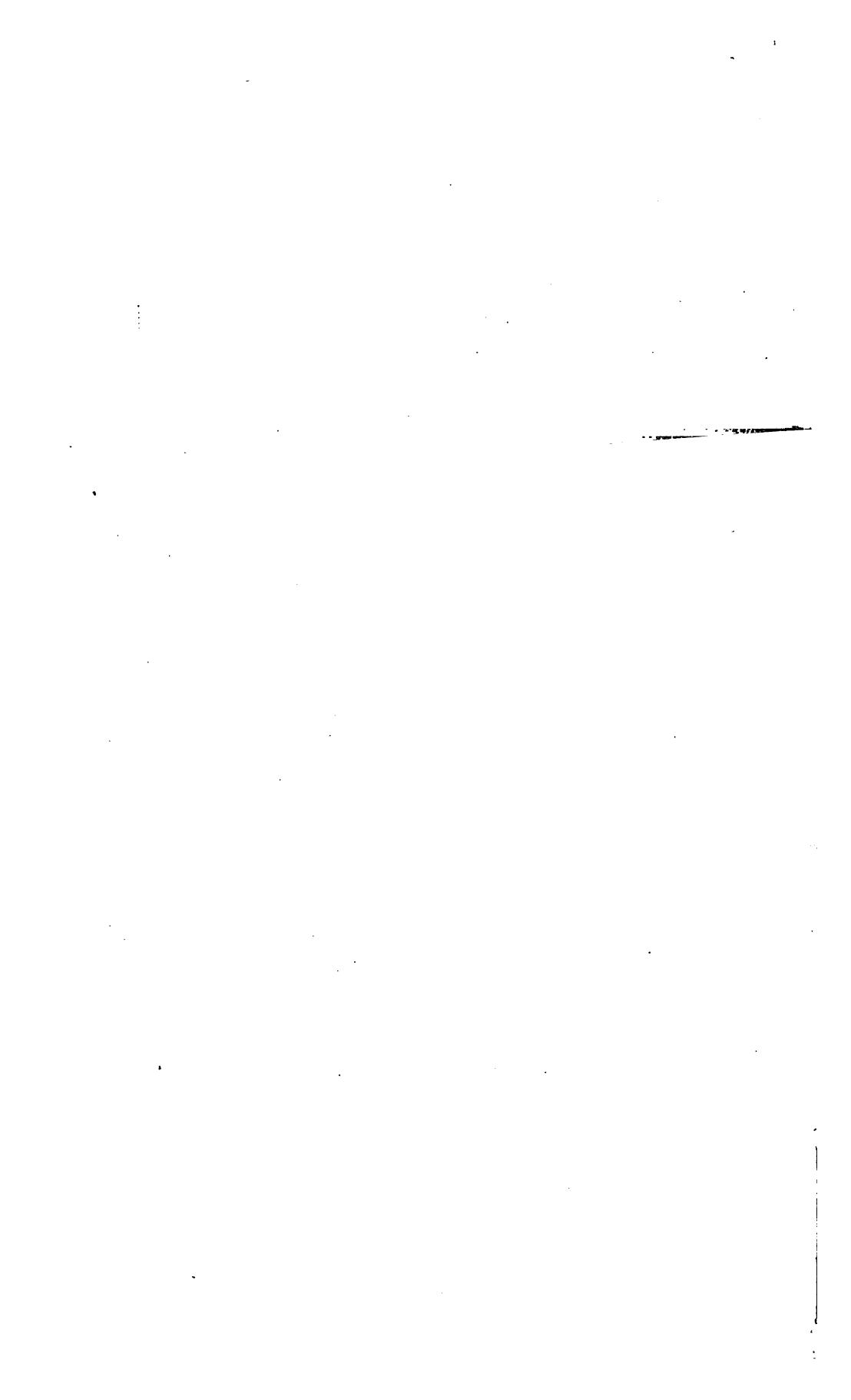


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CITY OF BOSTON.
SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,
FOR THE CITY OF BOSTON,

FOR THE YEAR 1880.

To the Honorable the City Council of the City of Boston: —

Section 15 of the Act of 1875, Chapter 185, entitled "An Act for the laying out of Public Parks in or near the City of Boston," requires that the Board of Park Commissioners "shall annually, in the month of January, make to the City Council of Boston a full report of its doings for the preceding year, including a detailed statement of all their receipts and expenditures."

In accordance therewith the Commissioners have the honor to submit the following report: —

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.

I.

Receipts and Expenditures of the Department for the year 1880.

BACK BAY PARK LAND ACCOUNT.

Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1879	\$26,309 10
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EXPENDITURES.

Amount paid for land purchased in 1880	\$3,570 73
Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1880	22,738 37

\$26,309 10

CITY DOCUMENT No. 12.

PUBLIC PARK, BACK BAY APPROPRIATION.

Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1879 . . .	\$48,018 52
Appropriation for the financial year 1880-81 . . .	214,000 00
	<u><u>\$262,018 52</u></u>

The expenditures from this appropriation, from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1880, have been as follows:—

BACK BAY PARK CONSTRUCTION ACCOUNT.

Filling.

Amount paid for filling done by the Boston & Albany Railroad under its contracts dated June 20, 1879, Jan. 28, April 29, and June 1, 1880, . . .	\$88,137 68
Paid cartmen for 1,021 squares filling, . . .	2,552 26
Superintendence and measuring filling, . . .	1,747 75
Culverts — labor and materials . . .	694 82
Engineering, soundings, and borings . . .	241 63
Grading — paid foremen and laborers, . . .	151 89
Advertising on account filling . . .	127 29
Superintendent's expenses, etc. . .	63 70
Tools and implements . . .	8 04
Printing . . .	6 40
	<u><u>\$93,731 46</u></u>

Boylston Street Bridge.

Amount paid I. A. Sylvester under his contract dated Sept. 28, 1880, for foundations and abutments . . .	6,630 13
Engineering, soundings, etc. . .	109 40
Advertising . . .	48 00
Printing . . .	16 23
	<u><u>6,803 76</u></u>

Plans and Designs.

Landscape Architect Advisory . . .	\$1,512 00
Draughting . . .	24 00
	<u><u>1,536 00</u></u>

Beacon Entrance Bridge.

Amount paid Boston & Albany Railroad Company for easement for bridge abutments . . .	168 63
	<u><u>\$102,239 85</u></u>

BACK BAY PARK BETTERMENT ACCOUNT.

Clerical services in examining records at Registry of Deeds and Assessors' office . . .	\$967 50
Advertising . . .	841 75
Draughting . . .	99 00
Stationery . . .	65 35
Printing . . .	4 61
	<u><u>1,978 21</u></u>
Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1880 . . .	<u><u>157,800 46</u></u>
	<u><u>\$262,018 52</u></u>

PARK COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

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DEPARTMENT APPROPRIATION.

Balance of department appropriation, Dec. 31, 1879	\$3,333 82
Amount of department appropriation for the financial year 1880-81	5,000 00
	<u> </u>
	<u>\$8,333 82</u>

The expenditures from this appropriation from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1880, have been as follows:—

BACK BAY PARK CONSTRUCTION ACCOUNT.

Office and General Expenses.

Salary of secretary and clerk	\$2,325 00
Printing	531 83
Office boy	172 50
Stationery	128 94
Office expenses	93 78
Drawing materials	48 25
Maps and plans	35 00
	<u> </u>
	<u>\$3,335 30</u>

Plans and Designs.

Landscape Architect Advisory	560 00
	<u> </u>
	<u>\$3,895 30</u>

BACK BAY PARK BETTERMENT ACCOUNT.

Clerical services in examining records at Registry of Deeds and Assessors' office	\$816 00
Printing	220 16
Advertising	67 18
	<u> </u>
	<u>1,108 29</u>

GENERAL ACCOUNT.

Arnold Arboretum.

Examining records	\$133 12
Printing 3,500 maps for report	128 00
Surveyors and assistants	109 50
Draughting plan for report	48 12
Surveying expenses	7 97
	<u> </u>
	<u>\$426 71</u>

West Roxbury Park.

Examining records	\$223 43
Printing report, including map	40 05
Draughting	8 00
	<u> </u>
	<u>271 48</u>

Charles River Embankment.

Printing 3,000 maps for report	\$43 31
Draughting	16 00
	<u> </u>
	<u>59 31</u>
Carried forward	757 50
	<u> </u>
	<u>\$4,998 59</u>

CITY DOCUMENT No. 12.

<i>Brought forward</i>	• • •	\$757 50	\$4,998 59
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Indexing Plans.

Draughtsman	• • •	210 00
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Highland Park.

Advertising notice of hearing	• • •	84 30	
Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1880	• • •	1,001 80	1,001 80
		2,333 43	2,333 43
			\$8,338 82

PARK NURSERY APPROPRIATION.

Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1879	• • •	\$414 95	
Appropriation for the financial year, 1880-81	• • •	1,000 00	1,000 00
			\$1,414 95

The expenditures from this appropriation from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1880, have been as follows:—

Labor	• • •	\$197 00	
Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1880	• • •	1,217 95	1,217 95
			\$1,414 95

INCOME.

Received from sale of marsh grass and paid to City Collector on account Public Park Sinking Fund	• • •	\$35 00	
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II.

Summary of Receipts and Expenditures on account of Back Bay Park Construction from July 23, 1877, to Dec. 31, 1880.

RECEIPTS.

From appropriations for Park Department	• • •	\$14,829 63	
From appropriations for Public Park, Back Bay	• • •	225,178 93	225,178 93
			\$240,008 56

EXPENDITURES.

Filling	• • •	\$212,315 41	
Office and general expenses	• • •	8,619 70	
Boylston Street bridge	• • •	6,803 76	
Plans and designs	• • •	6,628 90	
Engineering	• • •	5,472 16	
Beacon Entrance bridge	• • •	168 63	
			\$240,008 56

III.

Receipts and Disbursements of the Department from the Organization of the Board, Oct. 8, 1875, to Dec. 31, 1880.

PUBLIC PARK CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE.

Receipts.

Public Park Loan	\$450,000 00
Appropriations, less transfers and merged balances	428,393 71
	<u><u>\$878,393 71</u></u>

Disbursements.

Back Bay Park land account	\$443,261 63
Back Bay Park construction account	240,008 56
General account	9,251 26
Park Nursery, Austin Farm	1,782 05
Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1880	184,090 21
	<u><u>\$878,393 71</u></u>

PUBLIC PARK DEBT AND SINKING FUND.

Receipts.

Annual appropriations for Sinking Fund	\$108,000 00
Back Bay Park betterment	88,885 05
Annual appropriations for interest on debt	60,750 00
Interest on bank deposits and investments	8,785 16
From appropriations for Public Park, Back Bay and Park Department	4,008 30
Income from sale of marsh grass	112 75
	<u><u>\$270,541 26</u></u>

Disbursements.

Public Park Sinking Fund	\$205,782 96
Interest on Public Park Debt	55,687 50
Back Bay Park betterment account	4,008 30
Balance of interest on debt not due	5,062 50
	<u><u>\$270,541 26</u></u>

DEBT STATEMENT.

The Public Park Debt, Dec. 31, 1880, to be paid as it becomes due from the resources of the Public Park Sinking Fund.

Public Park, Back Bay, Loan, due Oct. 7, 1887 . . .	\$450,000 00
Less the means in the Sinking Fund for paying the same, Dec. 31, 1880	205,782 96
Debt, less means for paying	<u><u>\$244,217 04</u></u>

SINKING FUND STATEMENT.

Resources of the Public Park Sinking Fund, Dec. 31, 1880, in hands of Sinking Fund Commissioners; being bonds of the City of Boston and cash, with the dates when the bonds become due.

Albany Street Damages, March 1, 1887	\$30,000 00
Public Park, Back Bay, Oct. 1, 1887	75,000 00
Northampton Street District, July 1, 1889	2,000 00
Widening Commercial Street, Oct. 1, 1889	42,000 00
 Total Investments	\$149,000 00
Cash	56,782 96
 Total Resources	 <u>\$205,782 96</u>

BACK BAY PARK.

The appropriations of 1880, for the work on the Back Bay Park, were :—

For gravel filling	\$98,000 00
For structures (of which \$30,000 was for foundations of Beacon Entrance and Boylston Street bridges, and \$34,000 for masonry for same to mean high-tide)	116,000 00
 Total	 <u>\$214,000 00</u>

The work of filling on the western boundary road was continued by the Boston and Albany Railroad Company, under its contract of June 20, 1879, at \$3.45 per square, until January 28, 1880, when a new contract was made with the railroad company for filling the location of the proposed bridge on the extension of Boylston Street within the park, at \$3.25 per square, under which 5,800 squares of gravel filling have been delivered.

On April 24, 1880, proposals were advertised for, for filling on the southern boundary road, and on June 3, the proposal of the Boston and Albany Railroad Company, for doing the work at \$3.45 per square, was accepted and a contract signed.

About 15,673 squares of gravel filling have been deposited to December 31, on the marginal road along the western and southern boundary of the park, between the railroad and Huntington Entrance, and 6,360 feet of roadway filled to about grade eighteen of a general width of fifty feet.

Huntington Entrance has been nearly filled by the Sewer and Improved Sewerage departments, with earth brought in carts, from work under their charge, the amounts being 21,702 and 2,370 loads, respectively.

Pursuant to an agreement between the City of Boston and other owners of the territory bounded by Beacon Street, West Chester Park, the Boston and Albany Railroad, and Brookline Avenue, for the joint filling of that territory, a contract was made April 29, 1880, with the Boston and Albany Railroad Company, for filling the Beacon Entrance at \$3.20 per square. There have been deposited upon the whole territory to Dec. 31, 1880, 37,350 squares, of which 6,847 squares were deposited upon the Beacon Entrance, the whole to be completed Aug. 1, 1881.

A small amount of filling has been received by teams, amounting to 1,021 squares, and the Health Department has furnished 12,376 loads of ashes to July 30, since which no filling by that Department has been done.

A contract was made Sept. 28, 1880, with Isaac A. Sylvester, for building the foundations for the bridge on the extension of Boylston Street over the outlet of Back Bay, the work to be finished June 1, 1881.

Under a special appropriation and order placing the direction of the work in charge of this Department, the covered channel for Stony Brook has been built by day labor from a point opposite the present outlet of that stream to the Boylston Entrance, 1,700 feet, and the pile foundation and platform for the overflow gate-chamber is nearly ready for the masonry. Although being largely within park territory it is not a work of park construction proper, and the expenditures do not enter into the accounts of this Department.

All the above work has been done under the direction of Mr. Wightman, City Engineer.

BETTERMENTS.

Of the 618 assessments made upon estates for benefit derived from the locating and laying out of the Back Bay Park, more than three-fifths, or 388, have been paid in full. 104 assessments, amounting to \$251,000, are apportioned to be paid with the ordinary taxes in three annual instalments, the first of which is now being paid, and 126 assessments remain which have neither been paid nor apportioned, amounting to \$101,831; the total receipts of the City Collector for betterments and interest, to December 31, 1880, being \$88,885.05.

Petitions, by parties aggrieved by their assessments, have

been made in the case of 114 estates to have the amount of the benefit received by these estates assessed by a jury of the Superior Court, as provided in the park act. The amount of assessments involved is \$291,427, of which the Boston Water Power Company represents \$182,955.

In this connection it is instructive to observe the changes in the tax valuations of the lands assessed for betterment which have taken place since 1877, as evidence, favorable or otherwise, of the judgment of the Commissioners in fixing the assessments as they did.

So far as this evidence is admissible it indicates that the amount of betterment assessment was upon a conservative basis, and far below the actual benefit derived from the laying out of the park.

The Assessors' valuation of the lands assessed for betterment was

In 1877, before the establishment of the park .	\$11,143,751
In 1878, after	12,290,392
In 1879	12,855,664
And in 1880	16,529,900

Showing an increase in 1880 over 1877 of . . . \$5,386,149

Or $48\frac{3}{5}$ per cent., and yielding an increase of revenue in 1880 at the rate of \$15.20 per M. of . . . \$81,869.46

which is the present monetary value of the park as affecting the city's income, representing a value of \$2,000,000 at four per cent., and which justifies the opinion heretofore expressed by the Board that the park is not a tax upon the city at large, but that the increased taxes from the surrounding property pays its cost.

This increase of valuation is upon land alone, and does not include the buildings. The valuation of the land in the rest of the city during the same time, 1877 to 1880, was reduced \$36,990,149..

The following letter was addressed to His Honor the Mayor, March 17, 1880:—

PARK DEPARTMENT, March 17, 1880.

To His Honor FREDERICK O. PRINCE, Mayor:—

SIR,—The undersigned, Commissioners of Parks, respectfully ask your attention to the following statement of the operations of the city in connection with the Back Bay Improvement as affecting municipal finances. The information will not be new to you as you are familiar with the various departments of the city government, which, in some measure, are influenced by this work. It will, however, be found interesting and instructive not only to owners of estates adjacent to the improvement, but especially to citizens at large, who may very naturally

PARK COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

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be under the impression that their property is being additionally taxed for the benefit of a particular section of the city. The reverse is true. The tax rate is already favorably influenced by the purchase of park lands, and, in the opinion of the undersigned, will so continue to be in an increasing ratio, in succeeding years. An informal statement, such as this is intended to be, is the only way by which knowledge can be given necessary to an understanding of the premises, as the official reports of the various departments cannot so group the facts as to give the information.

Cost of 106 acres on Back Bay for park and surrounding streets	\$465,226 10
Betterments assessed upon adjacent estates	\$431,972 00
Increased valuation by Tax Assessors on adjoining estates, in consequence of purchase, in 1878 over 1877, \$1,146,641.00.	
Taxes on said increase in 1878, at \$12.80 per M.	14,677 00
Increased valuation by Tax Assessors on adjoining estates, in consequence of purchase, in 1879 over 1877, \$1,711,913.00.	
Taxes on said increase in 1879, at \$12.50 per M.	21,399 00
	\$468,048 00
Less loss in taxes on purchased lands for 1878 and 1879	11,770 00
	\$456,278 00

Amount of overdue unpaid taxes deducted from purchase money due the Boston Water Power Company	\$45,234 19
--	-------------

The city has been unable to collect these taxes previously, owing to the intricate complications with which the Boston Water Power Company was embarrassed. The 106 acres include, as directed by the City Council, the areas for the surrounding streets, amounting to about 613,000 feet, costing, at ten cents per foot, \$61,300. This expenditure is of the same nature as ordinary damages paid for land taken for streets throughout the city, and, for the purposes of this examination, should be eliminated from the cost of park lands proper.

RECAPITULATION.

Total cost of 106 acres	\$465,226 10
Less 613,000 feet for streets	61,300 00
	\$403,926 10
Cost of park lands proper	\$431,972 00
Increase of taxes on increased valuation for two years	\$36,076 00
Less loss in taxes on lands bought	11,770 00
	\$24,306 00
Net increased taxes	\$456,278 00
Gain to City Treasury	\$52,351 90
Amount overdue unpaid taxes secured	45,234 19
	\$97,586 09

The total expenditures in 1878 and 1879 for the improvement of lands purchased were \$118,583.95, all of which were for streets, and none for the park proper.

The Park Commissioners do not criticise the wisdom of the City Council in imposing upon this Department the duties of buying land for streets, and constructing the same, and of having charged to their account the cost of these public works which, heretofore, were exclusively the function of other departments; but nevertheless mention the matter, that it may be properly understood by such citizens as interest themselves in municipal affairs. While these streets will legally remain in charge of the Park Commissioners, they will correspond in their uses to the streets bordering upon the Common and Public Garden, namely, Tremont, Boylston, Arlington, Beacón, Charles, and Park streets.

In their report of 1876 the Commissioners expressed the opinion that within a limited period from the time of the purchase of park lands, the rate of taxation would thereby be reduced rather than increased. This opinion was based upon the actual results attained in other cities under similar circumstances, and its soundness is already apparent in Boston.

The annual interest on the bonds issued and to be issued in payment of the Back Bay lands, including streets, at 44 per cent., is	\$20,935 17
Increase of taxes on increased valuation in 1879, as above,	21,399 00
Overplus	\$463 83

The transactions already made in lands adjacent to the Back Bay Park since last May indicate a large advance over last year in values, which will materially augment the amounts received from taxes, and consequently the overplus.

Respectfully,

C. H. DALTON,
WM. GRAY, JR.,
HENRY LEE,
Commissioners.

This public work as a financial scheme has thus already passed beyond the point of experiment, and may be looked upon as a means of steadily reducing the rates of taxes throughout the city in the future as in the past, provided the work of improvement is prosecuted as rapidly as it can be economically done.

For the same reason the extension of Boylston Street, outside the park limits, both to the east and west, should receive early attention. That portion of this important avenue lying within the park, including the bridge over the water-way, is in progress, and to make it available for other purposes than as a part of the surrounding park road this extension is essential. It will also make available for improvement many lands upon which betterments have been assessed and which have paid increased taxes during the past three years.

MUDDY RIVER.

In a special report to the City Council, Dec. 17, 1874, the City Board of Health says:—

There are several places in which the evil (sewage deposits) is so great that we mention them in particular:—

First.—The old Roxbury Canal, crossing under Albany Street, near Chester Park.

Second.—The Stony Brook sewer discharging upon the Back Bay flats.

Third.—The Muddy Brook sewer, between Brookline Avenue and Downer Street in Ward 15.

In subsequent reports the same Board calls attention to the fact that the construction of a new system of sewerage will not abate the nuisances already existing at these points, and that nothing short of dredging or filling up the infected flats will remedy the evil.

The efforts of the Board have resulted in the abatement of two of these nuisances by the City Governments of 1877 and 1878.

First, by the purchase and establishment of the public park on the Back Bay, a sanitary measure.

Second, by the purchase and filling of the old Roxbury Canal property at a cost of \$371,000; while the third, or Muddy River, is yet unprovided for.

The delay in the latter has been due, in a measure, to the peculiarity of its position, it being the boundary between Brookline and Boston, and the difficulty of agreeing upon a remedy for the evil complained of that would be mutually satisfactory, and secure joint action by the city and town; and not from any lack of necessity for sanitary reasons.

The large cost of any measure looking to the contraction of the stream within narrow limits, by a new and straight channel to Charles River, and the filling of the old river-bed, has also operated unfavorably to the adoption of any plan promising adequate relief. Such a measure, in addition to its excessive cost, while allowing damages to property which would require to be taken, does not admit of betterment assessments, nor promise any advance in values of neighboring property, which would reimburse the city for its expenditure.

In the sixth report of this Board, December 29, 1877, mention was made of the Act of the Legislature of 1872, chap. 267, whereby the town of Brookline and the city of Boston were empowered to divert the waters of Muddy River so as to make them flow in a more direct line to Charles River, through the lands of any person or corporation as they

shall adjudge to be necessary for the public convenience or the public health, and the Board says, "It is for the interest of the town and city that united action should be taken at once, as authorized by the act," and recommends, "that the subject receive early attention, both for sanitary reasons and to facilitate the improvement of the park and adjacent territory."

The subject is again referred to in the report of 1879, as follows : —

During the past year the subject of the disposition of the waters of Muddy River has also been before the City Government, and was referred to a joint committee.

The Town of Brookline, in whose territory the river chiefly lies, also appointed a special committee of its citizens, with authority to negotiate with the city in the premises, inasmuch as joint action on the part of the city and town is necessary. No progress has been made. It does not appear that any serious engineering difficulties exist to prevent the accomplishment of this mutually important improvement; and the Commissioners urge that action be taken early in the current year to divert these waters into Charles River, by some route west of Brookline Avenue, as a necessary antecedent to their work within the park, into which these waters now flow. The Commissioners cannot consent to the admission of this river into the park, over whose head-waters the city exercises no control.

And also, in 1880, the Board says : —

Before any important work can be done in developing the Back Bay Park, it is imperative that the improvements heretofore contemplated for controlling the waters of Muddy River and Stony Brook be completed. The requisite legislation for carrying Muddy River in a direct course into Charles River, west of Brookline Avenue, by the joint action of the City of Boston and Town of Brookline, exists.

The sewerage from the lower part of Brookline is now carried into Charles River by a new drain; but nevertheless most of the surface-wash and swamp-water of that unsavory region of the town bordering upon the city is still brought into the Back Bay, adding to the defilement of the water and contamination of the air in the immediate vicinity of the most rapidly growing part of the city.

Stony Brook has since been provided for by a special appropriation to carry it under ground to Charles River.

During the past summer the Board has given consideration to the subject of the comprehensive treatment of the Muddy River region, under the Act of the Legislature of 1875, chapter 185, which authorizes the assessment of betterments, and with this view has had a preliminary examination made by Mr. Olmsted, and a plan suggested which would be mutually advantageous to the city and town, and offers a solution of the matter at the least eventual cost, both from the direct

returns in the way of betterments which can be assessed, and the annual increase of tax receipts from increased valuations and improvements. Mr. Olmsted's report follows.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF MUDDY RIVER.

To the Commissioners of Parks:—

GENTLEMEN,—In a plan which I had the honor, in conjunction with the City Engineer, to submit to you a year ago, the drainage difficulties of Back Bay were proposed to be met by forming a part of it into a basin in which water would, under ordinary circumstances, be maintained at a nearly uniform level, but in which, when an unusually high tide would for a few hours prevent outflow, a larger amount could be harmlessly stored. Public roads were to be laid out around and across this basin, and its banks to be planted, and otherwise treated picturesquely.

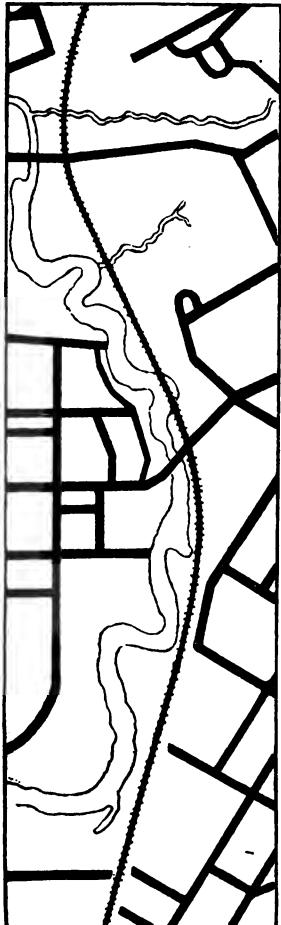
The plan was adopted, and with the concurrence of the City Council work is now advancing under it. In presenting it last January to the Council, you pointed out that while its scope was limited to that part of the Back Bay which had some years before been placed in your charge with a view to a public park, the evils which it was designed to meet would still remain to be dealt with in that arm of the bay known as Muddy River.

The question has since been raised whether the best plan for this purpose might not be found in extending a corresponding arm of the Back Bay basin to the head of tide-water in Muddy River, and the present report is designed to present this suggestion (as far as practicable in advance of surveys and mature study) in a form to invite preliminary discussion.

The tidal part of Muddy River above the basin now under construction has the usual character of a salt creek winding through a valley, the marshy surface of which, lying from fifteen to twenty feet below the general level of the adjoining uplands, is partially submerged at extreme high-water. The tide ordinarily flows to a point about a mile above the basin. Streets have been laid out upon the uplands upon no continuous system; those of each side independently, and regardless of what may be eventually required in the low lands; the leading motive being to make small bodies of land immediately available, at little cost, for suburban residences.

The city is rapidly advancing in compact blocks towards the region, and public convenience will, before many years, require a more comprehensive treatment of it.

It usually happens when a town is building up on both sides of a small water-course and valley that the sanitary and other disadvantages of the low ground prevent it from being much occupied, except in a way damaging to the value of the adjoining properties. In process of time the stream and valley and the uses to which they are put, come to be regarded as a nuisance ; and radical measures, such as the construction of a great underground channel, and the filling up of the valley, are urged as the only adequate remedy. The cost of these, and the local disturbance they make, excite opposition to them ; their complete beneficial operation is long delayed, and the character of the district becomes so strongly fixed before this period is reached that it can only be partially changed. Though necessary, therefore, to public health and to convenience of general transit through the district, the result in the increased tax-bearing capacity of the locality is no compensation for the required outlay.



As an alternative to such a possible course the policy now suggested for Muddy River would look to the preservation of the present channel with certain modifications and improvements adapted to make it permanently attractive and wholesome, and an element of constantly increasing advantage to the neighborhood. Except where the valley is now narrowest, it would be reduced in width by artificial banks, so that the river with its shores would everywhere have a general character, resembling that which it now has

near Longwood bridge, only that its water would be kept at a nearly uniform level, and guarded from defilement by intercepting sewers and otherwise. The Brookline margin would be the broadened base of the present railroad embankment, bearing a woody thicket. The opposite or Boston bank would

have an elevation above the water of ten feet where wholly artificial, rising where the natural bank is used to twenty feet. Upon this would be laid out a public way ninety feet wide in continuation of that now forming upon the Back Bay basin; divided like that into foot, carriage, and saddle courses, and designed to serve as a public promenade along the river bank, as well as a trunk line giving an element of continuity to the street system of the neighborhood.

It is proposed that this parkway should be continued along the small water-course above and through the valley to Jamaica Pond, which would add another mile to its length. There are three smaller ponds near the head of the valley, which would thus be skirted, and below them a large marsh, which, though formerly reached by the tide, is now a fresh-water swamp, and cannot long remain in its present condition without great peril to the health and life of the increasing population of the adjoining parts, both of Boston and Brookline. Physicians practising in the neighborhood believe it to have been already the source of serious epidemics.

The supply of water to it from local springs is supposed to be large enough to maintain a pond to be formed by a dam at the lower end, by which it would be changed from a foul and noisome to a pleasing and healthful circumstance. The property is of little value speculatively, and of none otherwise, and the improvement thus projected would be neither difficult nor costly. If the fresh-water supply should finally be thought insufficient for the purpose, it would be possible to extend the salt-water basin to cover the ground. The swamp-soil excavated would be of value for covering the slopes below, and the operation would not be costly.

Adopting either expedient, the result would be a chain of pleasant waters, including the four closely adjoining ponds above the swamp, extending from the "mill-dam" on Beacon Street to the far end of Jamaica Pond, all of natural and in some degree picturesque outline, with banks wooded and easily to be furnished with verdure and foliage throughout. Except at one point where there are about a dozen cheaply-built wooden dwellings and shops, the whole would be formed on land of little value, occupied by no buildings, and for no productive purposes, and all of it now in a condition hazardous to public health.

Such a chain of waters, even if connected and having a sweeping current, always becomes objectionable in a town, when streets are so laid out that its immediate borders are private property, or have private properties backing upon them. In such case it is found necessary to give it the char-

acter of a canal, to wall its banks with masonry, and, if the water supply greatly fluctuates, to take other measures to prevent its becoming a nuisance. At the best it is an eyesore. But if uniformly filled, its banks made comely, and kept neatly, in the usual manner of public parks, and if no private property is allowed to abut upon them, any natural water-course will be attractive and wholesome.

On the other hand, private property looking upon the parkway would at small cost be well drained; there would be nothing objectionable in its rear but in general a pleasant neighborhood, already formed, and, as it would lie midway between an attractive urban and an attractive suburban residence district, agreeably connected, there would be no doubt as to its ultimate character, or that it would be rapidly taken up for dwellings of a superior class. This prospect would have an immediate favorable influence on adjoining properties, and the entire operation would be attended by an advance of market and taxable values securing the city a rapid return for its outlay.

The indirect course of the parkway, following the river bank, would prevent its being much used for purposes of heavy transportation. It would thus, without offensive exclusiveness or special police regulation, be left free to be used as a pleasure route.

The Brookline Branch Railroad and the drive of the parkway, where they come nearest together, would be 200 feet apart, and there would be a double screen of foliage between them.

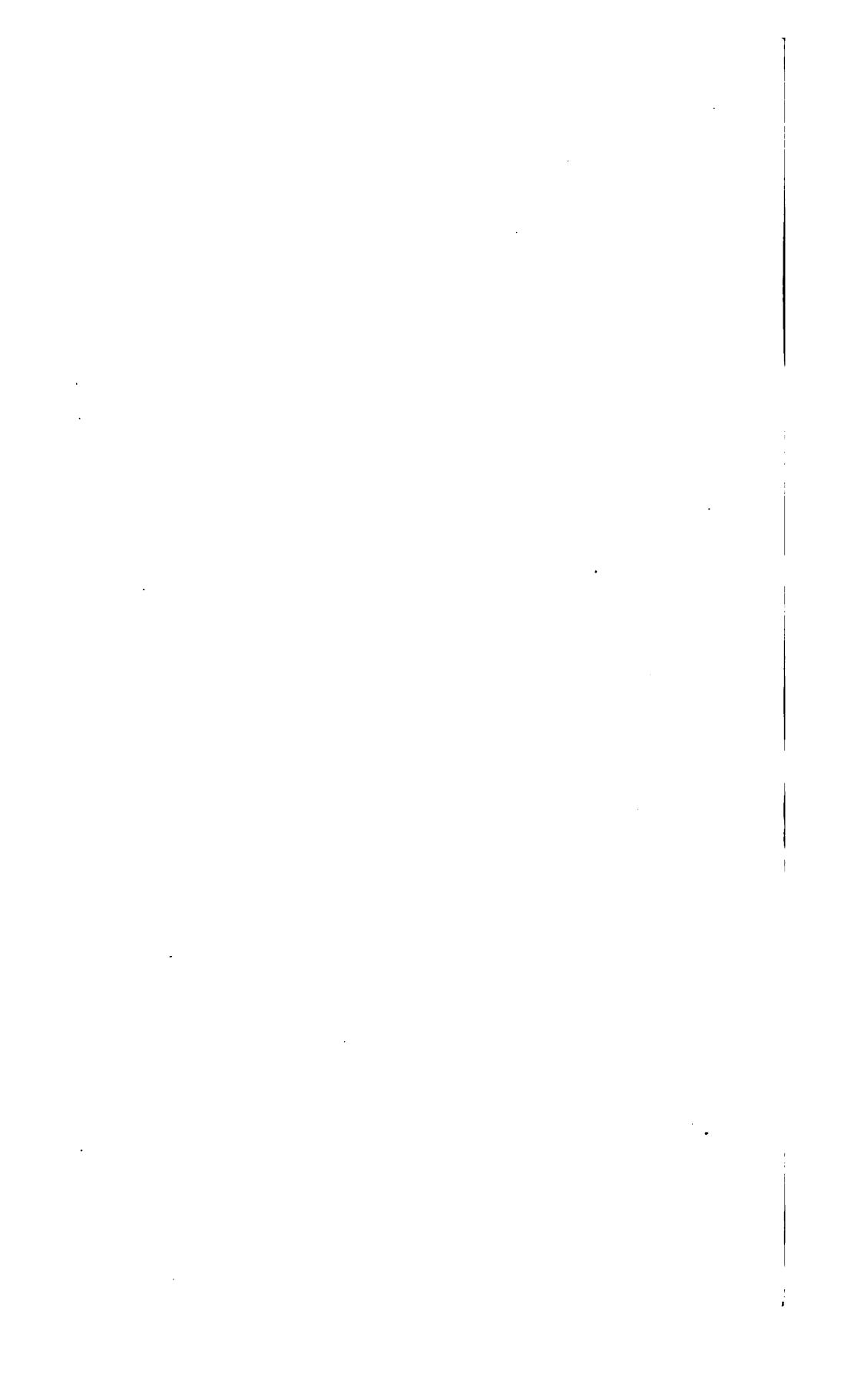
Taken in connection with the mall upon Commonwealth Avenue, the Public Garden and the Common, the parkway would complete a pleasure-route from the heart of the city a distance of six miles into its suburbs. These older pleasure-grounds, while continuing to serve equally well all their present purposes, would, by becoming part of an extended system, acquire increased importance and value. They would have a larger use, be more effective as appliances for public health, and every dollar expended for their maintenance would return a larger dividend.

The scheme offers hardly less advantage to Brookline than to Boston, and a plan of equitable coöperation in carrying it out is probably feasible.

If the interests of the city required that the region affected should be largely occupied for manufacturing and commercial purposes, and that for this reason it should be provided with frequent, continuous, and direct lines of communication upon easy grades, the proposition would be more open to objection. But such provisions would be very costly, and if the tendency

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at present manifest on every side to make the district a residence quarter, with only such provisions for trade as local convenience may call for, is not desirable to be checked, then the suggestion would seem to offer a much-needed sanitary improvement at moderate cost, and with a promise of large incidental profits.

Respectfully,

FREDERICK LAW OLTMSTED.

BOSTON, December, 1880.

ARNOLD ARBORETUM.

By an order of the City Council, passed May 3, 1880, this Board was requested to report, at as early a date as possible, what terms can be made with the President and Fellows of Harvard College, and what action it recommends under acts of the Legislature of 1880, chapter 144, entitled, "An Act to authorize the connection of the 'Arnold Arboretum' with the system of parks of the City of Boston;" and the report of the Board with its recommendations in the premises, was made to the Council Oct. 21, 1880, (City Doc. 118), to which your attention is respectfully called.

In a report to the President of the University concerning the condition and progress of the Arboretum for the year ending Aug. 31, 1880, the director, Mr. C. S. Sargent, says:—

The permanent planting of the collections of living plants has again been delayed. It was expected that, at least, a portion of the collections in nursery could have been arranged during the year. The negotiations, however, with the City of Boston, referred to in my last report, for a joint occupancy of the Arboretum by the university and the city, in connection with the system of public parks, are still pending. Public opinion now seems to strongly favor such an arrangement, but as it would, if carried into effect, modify the boundaries of the Arboretum, and considerably enlarge the area to be treated, it is not practicable to begin planting the collections until this arrangement is either finally adopted or rejected.

This delay is greatly to be regretted. It postpones the real work and usefulness of the Arboretum, which, in one direction, can only begin when it is arranged and opened to the public. Many of the trees in the nurseries have reached or are fast approaching a size which will preclude their successful removal into permanent positions; so that much of the earlier work of preparation must be recommenced unless a definite decision in regard to the future of the Arboretum is soon reached.

The necessary legislative action and the terms for an agreement between the city and the college authorities having been completed, it only remains for your honorable body to authorize the Commissioners to proceed as recommended in their report previously referred to.

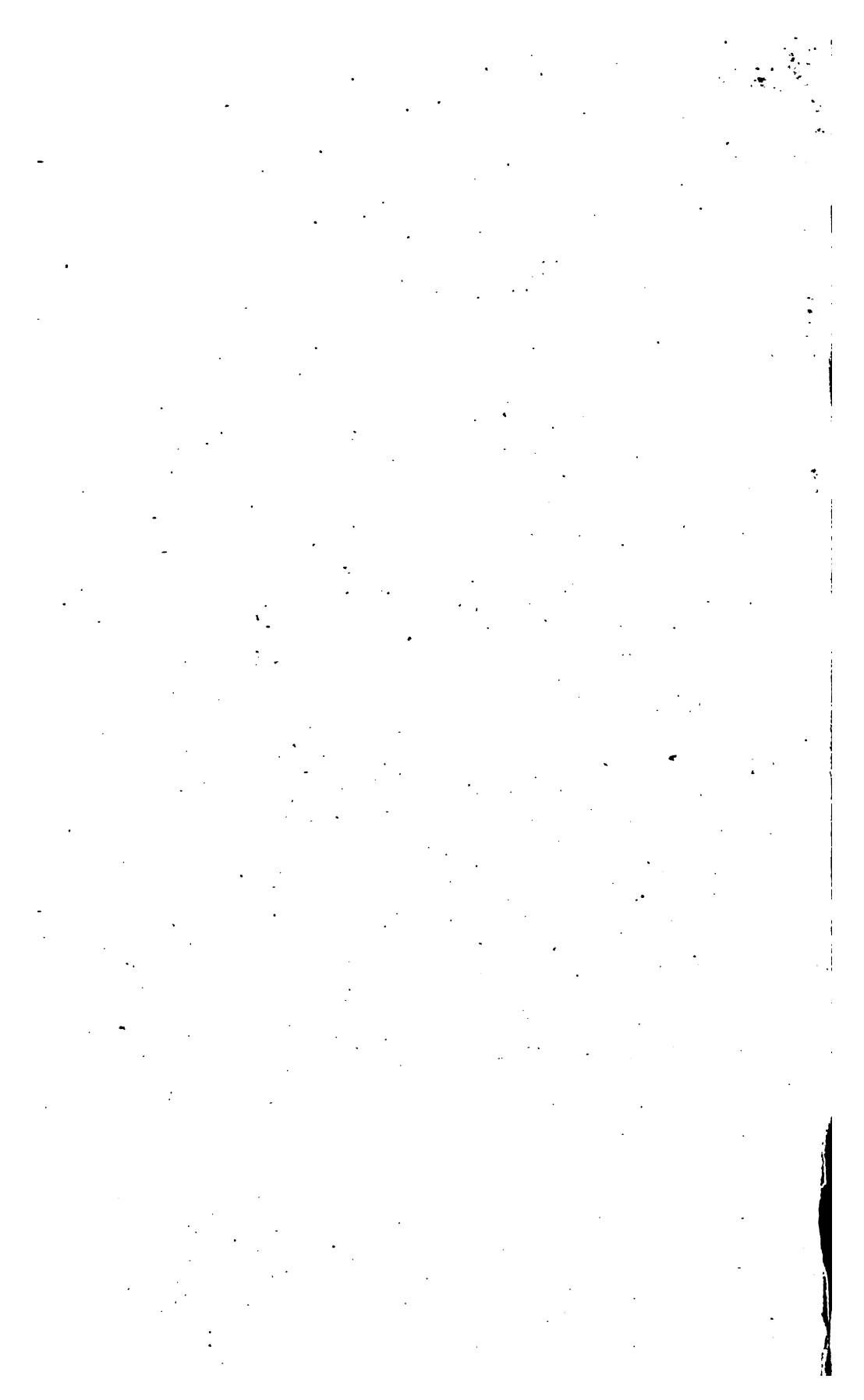
Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES H. DALTON,
WILLIAM GRAY, JR.,
HENRY LEE,

Commissioners.

BOSTON, January 29, 1881.





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HARLAN P. KEL

BEACON BLDG.
BOSTON,

SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

OF THE

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,

FOR THE

CITY OF BOSTON,

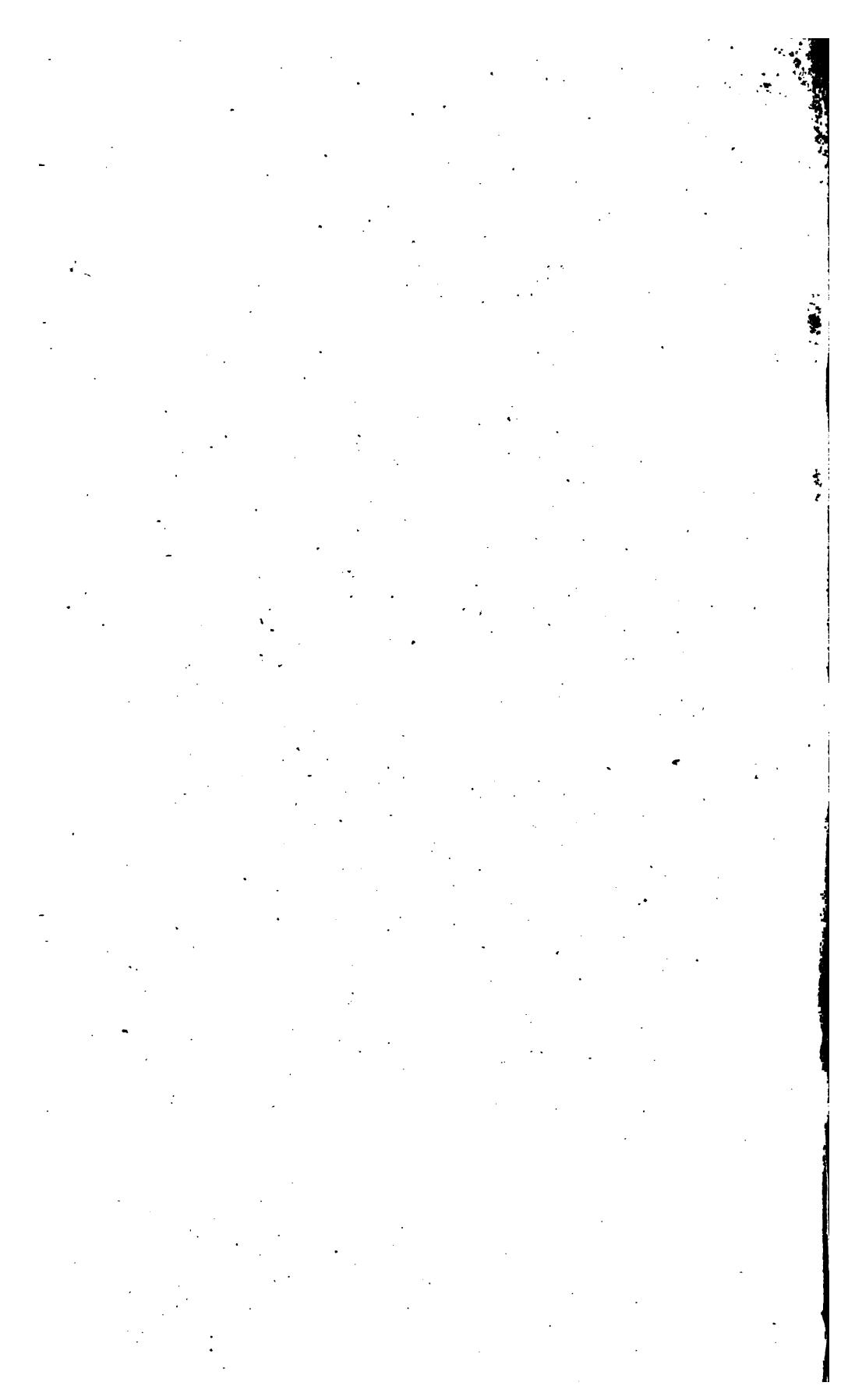
FOR THE YEAR 1881.



BOSTON:

ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL, CITY PRINTERS,
No. 39 ARCH STREET.

1882.



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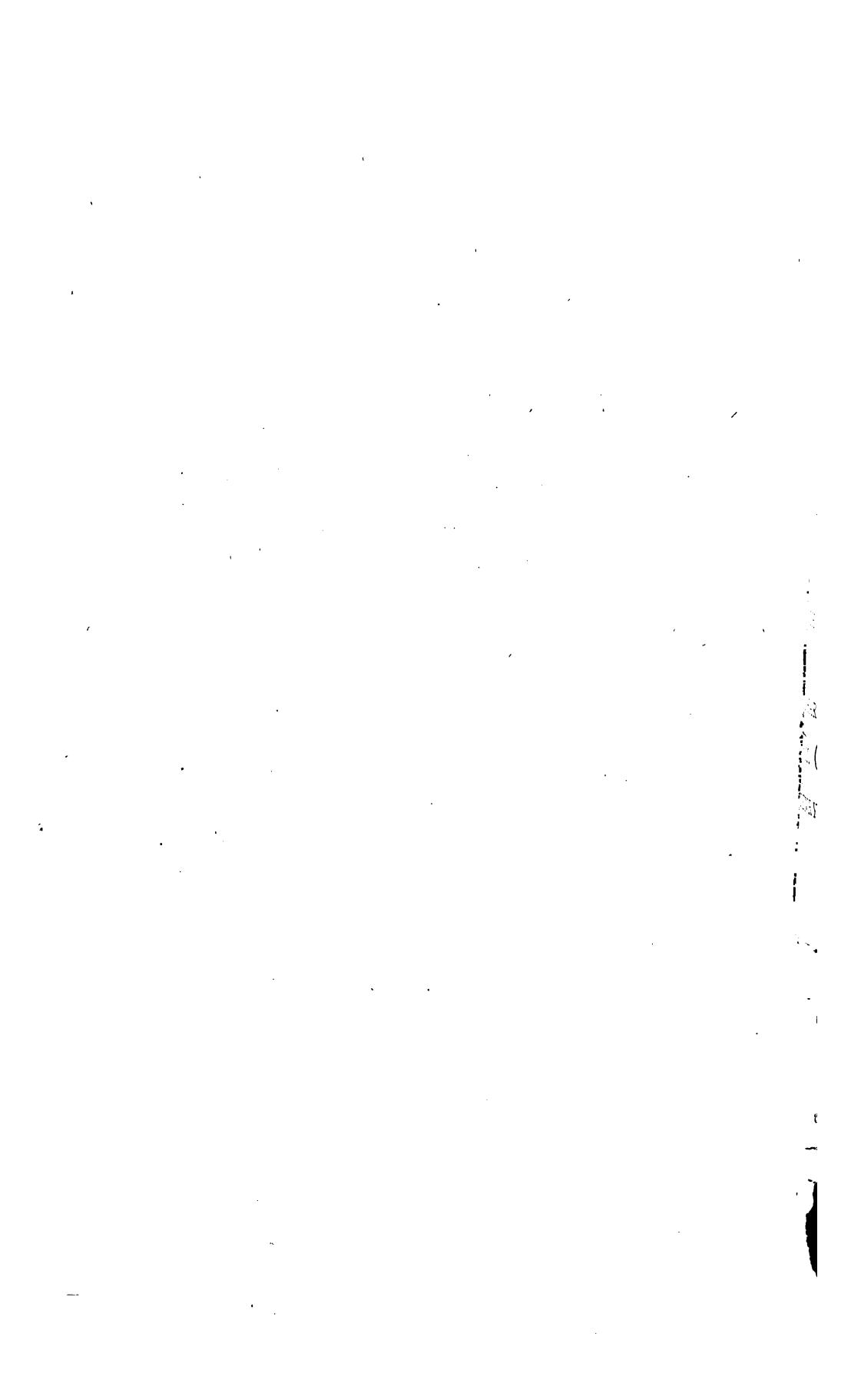
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[DOCUMENT 16 — 1882.]

CITY OF BOSTON.



SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,

FOR THE CITY OF BOSTON,

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF

CHARLES H. DALTON.

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W.M. GRAY, JR.

HENRY LEE.

onor

COMMISSIONERS OF PARKS.

*Receipts and Expenditures of the year
1881.*

BACK BAY PARK LAND ACCOUNT.

Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1880	<u>\$22,907 00</u>
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EXPENDITURES.

Amount paid for land purchased in 1881	\$981 79
Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1881	<u>21,925 21</u>
	<u>\$22,907 00</u>

PUBLIC PARK, BACK BAY APPROPRIATION.

Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1880	\$157,800 46
Appropriation for the financial year 1881-82	202,000 00
	<u><u>\$359,800 46</u></u>

The expenditures from this appropriation, from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1881, have been as follows:—

BACK BAY PARK CONSTRUCTION ACCOUNT.

Filling.

Amount paid for filling done by the Boston & Albany Railroad Co. under its contracts dated April 29, June 1, and Nov. 4, 1880	\$94,231 37
Paid Sewer Department for filling	4,769 60
Superintendence and measuring filling,	1,740 75
Culverts and ditches	516 25
Engineering expenses	83 78
Printing	27 21
	<u><u>\$101,368 96</u></u>

Boylston Street Bridge.

Amount paid I. A. Sylvester under his contract dated Sept. 28, 1880, for foundations and abutments	\$37,064 24
Materials of construction, freight and charges	4,618 30
Expenses of construction, labor and materials	1,733 45
Engineering expenses and superintendence	554 30
Fuel, supplies, carting, etc.	11 08
	<u><u>43,981 37</u></u>

Railroad Bridge.

Amount paid I. A. Sylvester under his contract dated April 12, 1881, for piers, abutments, and wing-walls	\$24,054 49
Amount paid D. H. Andrews for superstructure and erection of same,	4,448 80
Engineering expenses, soundings, etc.,	337 87
Advertising	62 50
Printing	20 68
	<u><u>28,924 34</u></u>

Beacon Entrance Bridge.

Materials of construction, freight and charges	\$15,886 04
Expenses of construction, labor and materials	11,751 04
Fuel, supplies, carting, etc.	632 28
	<u><u>28,269 36</u></u>

Amount carried forward, \$202,544 03

PARK COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

3

Amount brought forward, \$202,544 03

Excavating and Grading.

Expenses of excavating, labor and materials	\$4,086 43
Dredger and scows, materials and labor	227 19
Fuel, supplies, carting, etc.	160 80

Machinery, Tools, etc.

Hoisting engine, derrick and rigging, tools, etc. 2,561 12

Plans and Designs.

Landscape Architect Advisory 1,566 63

Retaining Walls.

Materials of construction, freight and charges	\$125 00
Expenses of construction, labor and materials	272 43
	897 43
Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1881	148,256 83

DEPARTMENT APPROPRIATION.

Balance of Department appropriation, Dec. 31, 1880	\$2,338 43
Amount of Department appropriation for the financial year 1881-82	<u>5,000 00</u>
	\$7,338 43

The expenditures from this appropriation, from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1881, have been as follows:—

BACK BAY PARK CONSTRUCTION ACCOUNT.

Office and General Expenses.

Salary of secretary and clerk	\$2,500 00
Printing	184 56
Office boy	112 50
Stationery	72 45
Maps and plans	14 00
Office expenses	13 59
	\$2,897 10

Plans and Designs.

Landscape Architect Advisory . . .	\$544 00
H. H. Richardson, Architect . . .	500 00
	<hr/>
	1,044 00
	<hr/>
	\$3,941 10
	<hr/>
	22,941 10

CITY DOCUMENT No. 16.

<i>Amount brought forward,</i>	\$3,941 10
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GENERAL ACCOUNT.*Muddy River Improvement.*

Printing 3,000 maps for report of 1880,	\$162 00
Printing 2,000 copies each of two plans for report of 1881	160 00
Maps and plans, mounted and on poles,	10 80
	\$382 80

West Roxbury Park.

Mr. Olmsted's expenses for self and assistants in examination of grounds, etc., for Committee on Parks	\$66 62
Clerical services in copying Assessors' records	6 00
	72 62

Square.

(Junction of Boylston Street and Huntington Avenue.)

Printing report on laying out the land bounded by Boylston Street, Huntington Avenue, and Dart- mouth Street as a public park	10 15
	415 57
Balance of 1880-81 appropriation, merging at end of financial year	232 03
Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1881	2,744 73
	\$7,333 43

MUDY RIVER IMPROVEMENT APPROPRIATION.

Appropriation for the financial year 1881-82 for surveys, plans, and investigations	\$5,000 00
--	-------------------

The expenditures from this appropriation, from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1881, have been as follows :—

Plans and designs	\$1,031 25
Surveyors and assistants	881 65
Printing	81 81
Surveying expenses	23 43
	\$1,518 14
Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1881	3,481 86
	\$5,000 00

PARK NURSERY APPROPRIATION.

Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1880	\$1,217 95
---	-------------------

The expenditures from this appropriation, from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1881, have been as follows :—

Labor	\$96 50
Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1881	1,121 45
	\$1,217 95

INCOME.

Received from sale of marsh grass and paid to City Collector on account Public Park Sinking Fund \$35 00

II.

Summary of Receipts and Expenditures on account of Back Bay Park Construction from July 23, 1877, to Dec. 31, 1881.

RECEIPTS.

From appropriations for Park Department	\$18,770 73
From appropriations for Public Park, Back Bay,	436,722 56
	<u>\$455,493 29</u>

EXPENDITURES.

Filling	\$313,684 37
Boylston Street bridge	50,785 13
Railroad bridge	28,924 34
Beacon Entrance bridge	28,437 99
Office and general expenses	11,516 80
Plans and designs	9,239 53
Engineering	5,472 16
Excavating and grading	4,474 42
Machinery, tools, etc.	2,561 12
Retaining-walls	897 48
	<u>\$455,493 29</u>

III.

Receipts and Disbursements of the Department from the Organization of the Board, Oct. 8, 1875, to Dec. 31, 1881.

PUBLIC PARK CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE.

Receipts.

Public Park Loan	\$450,000 00
Appropriations, less transfers and merged balances	640,161 68
	<u>\$1,090,161 68</u>

Disbursements.

Back Bay Park land account	\$444,074 79
Back Bay Park construction account	455,493 29
General account	9,666 83
Park Nursery, Austin Farm	1,878 55
Muddy River Improvement	1,518 14
Balance unexpended, Dec. 31, 1881	177,530 08
	<u>\$1,090,161 68</u>

PUBLIC PARK DEBT AND SINKING FUND.

Receipts.

Annual appropriations for Sinking Fund	\$144,000 00
Back Bay Park betterment	142,393 08
Annual appropriations for interest on debt	75,937 50
Interest on bank deposits and investments	17,754 16
From appropriations for Public Park, Back Bay and Park Department	4,008 30
Income from sale of marsh grass	147 75
	<u> </u>
	\$384,240 79

Disbursements.

Public Park Sinking Fund	\$304,294 99
Interest on Public Park Debt	75,937 50
Back Bay Park betterment account	4,008 30
	<u> </u>
	\$384,240 79

DEBT STATEMENT.

The Public Park Debt, Dec. 31, 1881, to be paid as it becomes due from the resources of the Public Park Sinking Fund.

Public Park, Back Bay, Loan, due Oct. 1, 1887	\$450,000 00
Less the means in the Sinking Fund for paying the same, Dec. 31, 1881	304,294 99
Debt, less means for paying	<u> </u>

\$145,705 01

SINKING FUND STATEMENT.

Resources of the Public Park Sinking Fund, Dec. 31, 1881, in hands of Sinking Fund Commissioners; being bonds of the City of Boston and cash, with the dates when the bonds become due.

Albany Street Damages, March 1, 1887	\$30,000 00
Public Park, Back Bay, Oct. 1, 1887	75,000 00
Northampton Street District, July 1, 1889	2,000 00
Widening Commercial Street, Oct. 1, 1889	42,000 00
	<u> </u>
Total Investments	\$149,000 00
Cash	155,294 99
	<u> </u>
Total Resources	\$304,294 99

LOANS AUTHORIZED.

Loans authorized by the City Council of 1881, but not negotiated.

West Roxbury Park	\$600,000 00
Charles River Embankment	800,000 00
Muddy River Improvement	200,000 00
City Point Park	100,000 00
Arnold Arboretum	60,000 00
East Boston Park	50,000 00
	<u> </u>
	\$1,310,000 00

BACK BAY PARK.

The appropriations of 1881, for the work on the Back Bay Park, were : —

For abutments and superstructure of bridge over the Boston and Albany Railroad	\$40,000
For Boylston Street arch	62,000
For retaining-walls and general work	40,000
For gravel filling on park entrances and roadways,	60,000
Total	\$202,000

The appropriation for filling has been expended, and that for retaining-walls and general work will be expended by the end of the financial year, and the unexpended balance of the appropriations for bridges will be exhausted in the prosecution of these works during the coming season.

It is the intention of the Board to ask for appropriations required to complete the construction of the Beacon Entrance, so called, between Beacon Street and Boylston Street, also the portion of Boylston Street within the park. This will require the building of the retaining and parapet walls on the semi-circular drive from Commonwealth Avenue to Boylston Street, and the filling of the streets to the intended grade. A stone curb and iron fence, on concrete foundations, will be placed upon the outside lines of the streets surrounding the basin between Commonwealth Avenue and Beacon Street, and the slopes of the water-way from Beacon Street to Boylston Street can then be graded and loamed ready for planting.

With regard to the contemplated works south of Boylston Street, the boundary road around the park and the entrances thereto should be graded to their full width, and made ready for surfacing and fencing, to enable the owners of adjoining lands to improve their property. The work of excavating and forming the interior of the basin, when begun, should be prosecuted as rapidly as possible, to avoid an unnecessary continuance of the nuisance which the digging up of the mud banks will be likely to create. The machinery necessary to do this work is contracted for, and the Engineer expects it to be delivered on the ground and set up early in March.

Loam will soon be required, and the Board is informed that there is a large amount of good material in the new basin at Framingham about to be constructed by the Water Board, and the Commissioners renew their recommendation, contained in their report for the year 1879, as follows : —

"The subject of utilizing the soil in the Sudbury River basins for the public grounds in the city, and at the same time improving the purity of the waters, was laid before the City Council of last year. Before two of the basins were filled this Board examined the quality of the soil, and found it to be adapted to the surfacing of the park. It is useless and probably deleterious where it is, and can be removed, stored, and brought to the city as required, with much greater economy than similar material can be secured in any other way.

"It is recommended that the Water Board and the Commissioners jointly be authorized to remove such portions of the soil as may be most mutually advantageous and convenient."

Estimates for all of the above works will be presented at the proper time.

For a detailed statement of the work done upon the park the preceding year, the Board refers to the report of the Engineer, which follows :—

BOSTON, January 25, 1882.

CHARLES H. DALTON, Esq., *Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Parks*:—

SIR,—I submit, in accordance with your request, the following statement of the work which has been done, and which is now in progress, on the Back Bay Park, the execution of which has been intrusted to me by your Board :—

FILLING.

At the beginning of the year there was an uncompleted contract with the Boston and Albany Railroad Company, for the filling of the boundary road between Longwood Entrance and Huntington Entrance. The work was begun July 1, 1880, and was finally completed Jan. 27, 1881. The total amount of material delivered was 13,197 squares. The contract price was \$3.45 per square.

The supplementary contract made by your Board, Nov. 4, 1880, for the filling of the roadway between Huntington Entrance and Boylston Street, was completed May 26, 1880. The total amount of material delivered under this contract was 10,260 squares. The contract price was \$3.20 per square.

Under an arrangement with the Boston and Albany Railroad Co., made shortly after the completion of the supplementary contract, 12,120 squares of filling have been de-

livered upon the park. The material was used to widen the roadway between the Beacon Entrance bridge and also the Longwood Entrance, for grading around the Stony Brook gate-chamber and on the roadway near the chamber. This work was completed Dec. 19, 1881. The price paid per square was \$3.20.

The filling of the Beacon Entrance, under the contract made April 29, 1880, has not been prosecuted to any extent during the past year, the amount delivered being only 2,072 squares. This work cannot be completed to advantage until the construction of the retaining-walls between Commonwealth Avenue and the Beacon Entrance bridges; and the contract now in force did not contemplate the filling above grade 17.

BRIDGES.

Boylston Street Arch Bridge, over Park Water-Way.

The foundations and abutments, to a height of 3.2 feet below the apparent springing line, have been completed. A contract for two additional courses, aggregating 4 ft. 3 in. in height, has been made, and the delivery of the stones under this contract is practically completed, as only a few condemned stones remain to be replaced. The work of laying these two courses of stones is to be at once commenced, if favorable weather should prevail.

Contracts have also been made with C. T. Hall, of Belfast, Maine, for the red-granite voussoirs of both faces of the arch, and with the Cape Ann Granite Co., of Gloucester, Mass., for the seam-faced voussoirs to complete the faces of the arch. The stones are to be furnished in time to commence the work of laying as soon as the season opens.

The centring for the arch is completed, and is stored in readiness to be placed in position as soon as the weather will permit. It was not deemed advisable to set up this centring in the fall, although it was completed, for the reason that the ice, which could not be prevented except at large expense from forming around and between the supports, would probably have damaged the structure, and any work which had been laid upon it could not have been properly protected during the winter.

Beacon Entrance Bridge, over B. & A. R.R.

The foundations of the abutments and wing-walls of this bridge are completed, and have been for some time awaiting the delivery of the ashlar work for the abutments. As a measure of economy, and also to save time, it was decided to

use the stones from the Beacon Hill reservoir for this work; but, as the bottom courses of the reservoir were also to be used for the bottom courses of the abutments, the removal and storing of the stones was necessary, until these bottom courses could be reached in the process of taking down the reservoir. These courses have very recently been delivered. A side track has been laid by the B. & A. R.R. Co., so that the stones could be transferred from the point of delivery, on the north side of the railroad, to the south side, where they were needed first, and the work of building the abutments has been commenced, and will be prosecuted whenever the weather will permit.

The plans for the iron bridge will be finished in a short time, it being the intention to have the bridge completed as soon as the abutments are in readiness to receive it.

Boston & Albany Railroad Bridge, over Park Water-Way.

The abutments and piers for about one-half of this bridge are completed, and the work upon the remainder is now being prosecuted by the contractors at night as well as day. The iron bridge is completed, except that the girders are not in the positions they will occupy when the masonry is finished. The girders for two tracks rest upon the portions of the abutments and piers already completed, and the girders for the third track are upon timber trestle-work. Trains have been running over them for more than a month. It is expected that the masonry will be finished within six weeks.

Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue Bridges.

The Beacon Street bridge, built under the direction of the Committee on Paving, was completed August 17, 1881, and, in connection with it, the temporary dam which enables the excavation of the Park water-way to be prosecuted without interruption by the influx of the tide. As an additional precaution against flooding from this cause, the coffer-dam used by the contractor for building this bridge has been allowed to remain, and will be kept intact until the excavation between Beacon Street and the B. & A. R.R. is completed.

The Commonwealth Avenue bridge abutments, built under the direction of the Committee on Streets, were completed Nov. 9, 1881, and a contract for the iron bridge was made Nov. 5, 1881; the terms of the contract requiring its completion on or before the first of February. It has, however, been impossible for the contractors for the bridge to obtain

the material with which to construct it, although, finding it useless to attempt to obtain the iron from American mills, their order for it was placed in England immediately upon the award of the contract. It is not now expected that the bridge will be in place before the first of April.

Excavation of Water-Way.

This work has been actively prosecuted on the portion of the water-way between Beacon Street and the B. & A. R.R., since the completion of the Beacon Street bridge.

Teams and a wire-rope machine excavator have been used ; and the work has been practically completed between Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue. It is the intention to have the excavation finished by the time the railroad-bridge is done ; but the limited capacity of the machine with which most of the work is necessarily done, as the bottom is too soft in most places for teams to work, may prevent its completion at the intended time.

The steam-dredge and scows to be used for the excavation of the water-way in the portion of the Park south of the railroad are now being built. The dredge is to be completed and ready for use on or before March 10, and the scows are being framed in the building on Albany Street which has been used for the construction and storage of the centring for the Boylston Street arch bridge.

Covered Channel of Stony Brook.

There remains of this work 1,200 feet of the conduit to complete, and the superstructure of the gate-chamber. The conduit is being built at the rate of about 30 feet per day ; the gate-chamber superstructure cannot be built to advantage until spring.

The conduit being of wood, work upon it has been prosecuted in winter as well as summer, and the early completion of this entire work will remove the only remaining obstacle to the prosecution of the excavation and grading within the limits of the park.

Respectfully,

HENRY M. WIGHTMAN,

City Engineer.

BETTERMENTS.

Of the 618 assessments made upon estates for benefit derived from the locating and laying out of the Back Bay Park, three-fourths, or 462, have been paid in full. 98 assessments, amounting to \$237,953, are apportioned to be paid with the ordinary taxes in three annual instalments, the first and second of which are now being paid, and 58 assessments remain which have neither been paid nor apportioned, amounting to \$70,160; the total receipts of the City Collector for betterments and interest, to December 31, 1881, being \$142,393.08.

Petitions, by parties aggrieved by their assessments, have been made in the case of 113 estates to have the amount of the benefit received by these estates assessed by a jury of the Superior Court, as provided in the park act. The amount of assessments involved is \$291,427, of which the Boston Water Power Company represents \$182,955.

The City Solicitor informs the Board in regard to the matters before the courts arising from the assessments for betterment, as follows: "The case of Dwight Foster *et al.*, petitioners for *certiorari* to vacate said assessments, has been argued, and is now waiting the decision of the Supreme Judicial Court. The suits in the Superior Court for reduction of the betterment, and the other petitions for *certiorari*, are awaiting the decision in said case. Meanwhile, the Collector has been enjoined from selling the lands to collect the assessments, the petitioners having entered into stipulations, with sureties, agreeing to pay whatever betterment may be finally adjudged by the Court to be payable on account of their respective estates."

In this connection it is instructive to observe the changes in the tax valuations of the lands assessed for betterment which have taken place since 1877, as evidence, favorable or otherwise, of the judgment of the Commissioners in fixing the assessments as they did.

So far as this evidence is admissible it indicates that the amount of betterment assessment was upon a conservative basis, and far below the actual benefit derived from the laying out of the park.

The Assessors' valuation of the lands assessed for betterment was: —

In 1877, before the establishment of the park .	\$11,143,751
In 1878, after	12,290,392
In 1879	12,855,664

In 1880	\$16,529,900
In 1881	19,957,400
Showing an increase in 1881 over 1877 of . . .	\$8,813,649
Or 79 per cent., and yielding an increase of revenue in 1881 at the rate of \$13.90 per M. of . . .	\$122,509.72

which is the present monetary value of the park as affecting the city's income, representing a value of \$3,000,000 at four per cent., and which justifies the opinion heretofore expressed by the Board that the park is not a tax upon the city at large, but that the increased taxes from the surrounding property pays its cost.

In their report of 1876 the Commissioners expressed the opinion that within a limited period from the time of the purchase of park lands the rate of taxation would thereby be reduced rather than increased. This opinion was based upon the actual results attained in other cities under similar circumstances, and its soundness is already apparent in Boston.

The tax rate is already favorably influenced by the purchase of park lands, and, in the opinion of the Commissioners, will so continue to be in an increasing ratio, in succeeding years.

This increase of valuation is upon land alone, and does not include the buildings. The valuation of the land in the rest of the city during the same time, 1877 to 1881, was reduced \$27,621,449.

New buildings have been erected upon this territory since 1877, which were valued by the assessors in 1881 at \$3,992,300, which are due, in a large measure, to the influence of the park, and from which the city derives an income this year of \$55,492.97.

The continuous rise in value of the lands, and their rapid absorption for dwellings, make it evident that the estates bordering upon the park will be required for similar uses in the near future, and that the completion of the system of park roads should be diligently prosecuted.

MUDY RIVER IMPROVEMENT.

Under an order of the City Council, passed February 16, 1881, and an appropriation of \$5,000 for the purpose, this Board, in connection with the Brookline Park Commission, caused surveys of Muddy River to be made, and a plan designed for laying out and improving the same,—a report

upon which was made to the City Council October 24, 1881 (City Doc. 130). The plans then presented, viz.: "The first, a plan of the land proposed to be taken, as surveyed by the City Engineer, showing the contours and the boundary-line between Boston and Brookline; the second, a plan by Mr. Olmsted, for the laying out and improvement of the same," are also contained in this report.

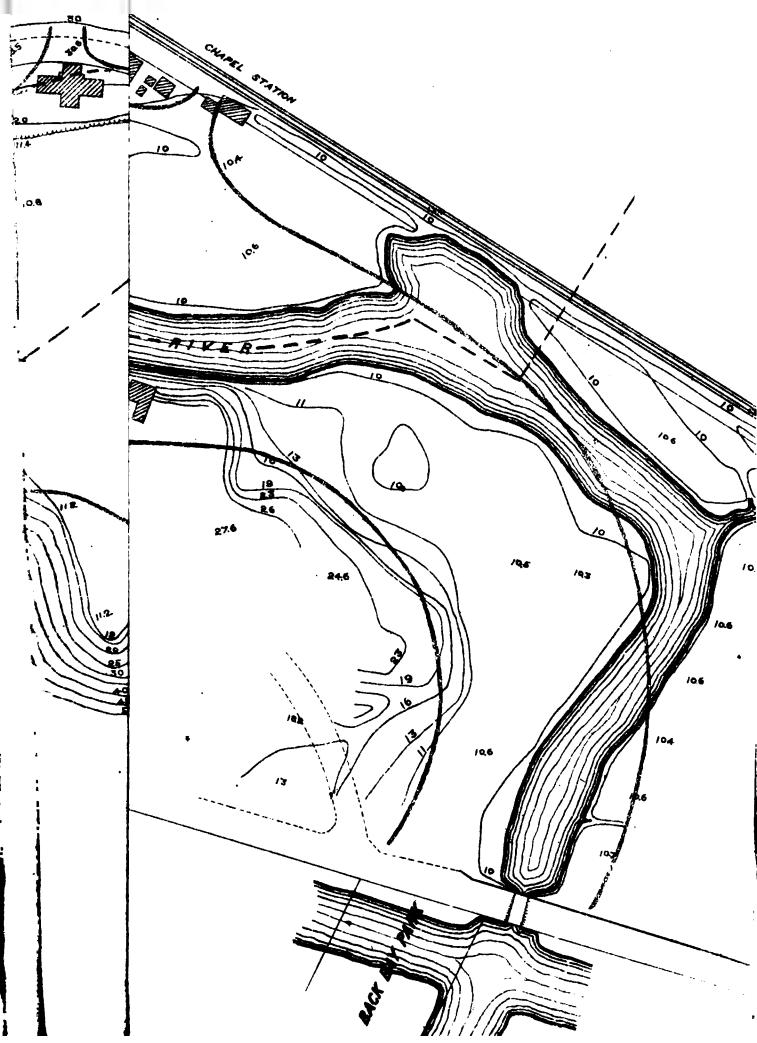
Action in the matter was taken by the City Council by the following order, for a loan to begin this important work:—

"CITY OF BOSTON,
"IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Dec. 5, 1881.

"Ordered, That the City Treasurer be and he is hereby authorized to borrow, under the direction of the Committee on Finance, the sum of two hundred thousand dollars, the bonds or certificates of debt to be issued in negotiating this loan to be denominated on the face thereof 'The Public Park Loan,' and to bear such rate of interest as the Committee on Finance shall determine; and the Park Commissioners are hereby authorized to expend said sum for the taking in fee, by purchase or otherwise, for the purpose of a public park, lands to the amount of two hundred thousand dollars in assessed valuation, for the Muddy River Improvement, whenever the Town of Brookline shall coöperate and appropriate a proportionate sum for said improvement. Passed: Yeas, 9; nays, 3. Sent down for concurrence. Dec. 22, came up concurred: Yeas, 53; nays, 1. Approved by the Mayor, Dec. 24, 1881. A true copy. Attest: JOHN T. PRIEST,
Asst. City Clerk."

CHARLES RIVER EMBANKMENT.

Upon the petition of the city for a grant of a portion of the Charles River flats, between Canal bridge and West Boston bridge, for the purpose of constructing portions of the Charles River Embankment, and after consultations with the State Board of Harbor and Land Commissioners to agree upon a harbor line, hearings before the Committee on Harbors and Public Lands of the Legislature, and viewing the premises, the committee reported, and the Legislature passed the following bill:—





"COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

[CHAP. 92.]

"In the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty-one.

"AN ACT IN ADDITION TO 'AN ACT FOR THE LAYING OUT OF PUBLIC PARKS IN OR NEAR THE CITY OF BOSTON.'

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

"SECTION 1. The Board of Park Commissioners of the City of Boston is hereby authorized and empowered to build a sea-wall on the Boston side of the lower basin of the Charles River, between Craigie's bridge and West Boston bridge, and to fill up the grounds enclosed by said wall for the purposes of a public park, in accordance with the provisions of chapter one hundred and eighty-five of the Acts of the year eighteen hundred and seventy-five. The said sea-wall shall be on or within the following lines:—

"Beginning at a point on the southerly side of Craigie's bridge, distant two hundred feet perpendicular from the westerly line of Charles Street, and running southerly by a line parallel to said Charles Street to a point opposite the first angle in said street; thence turning a similar angle and running southerly by a line parallel to and two hundred feet perpendicular again from said Charles Street to a point opposite another angle in said street, near Fruit Street; thence turning a similar angle and running southerly by a straight line two hundred feet perpendicular from and parallel to the next adjoining portion of said Charles Street to West Boston bridge.

"The lines of the sea-wall aforesaid shall constitute the harbor lines, beyond which no wharf, pier or other structure, and no filling-in shall be extended into or over the tide-water of the said basin, excepting such landing-places as the said Park Commissioners shall build with the approval of the Board of Harbor and Land Commissioners; and if the construction of said sea-wall and the filling-in of the grounds thereby enclosed shall, in the opinion of said Harbor and Land Commissioners, cause a projection injurious to the flow of the current and the protection of the harbor, then the said Park Commissioners of the City of Boston shall make suitable remedy or provision for the same, by connecting the line of the said sea-wall with the present sea-wall, in such manner as the said Board of Harbor and Land Commissioners shall approve, and may occupy and use any spaces thereby

enclosed for the same purposes for which said sea-wall and filling-in is authorized.

"SECT. 2. This act is made subject to the following conditions and restrictions, namely:—

"The City of Boston or the said Board of Park Commissioners shall take, by purchase or otherwise, all the land, dock and wharf property lying westerly of said Charles Street between said bridges, under the provisions of said chapter one hundred and eighty-five of the Acts of the year eighteen hundred and seventy-five, which, together with the grounds above authorized to be enclosed and filled up, shall be used solely for the purposes of a public park, facing and abutting upon the said Charles River basin. And when the City of Boston or the said Park Commissioners shall have taken the said land and wharf property, and built the said sea-wall, and fitted up the said grounds as a park as aforesaid, and so long as the same shall be used solely as said park, the Commonwealth will not authorize or permit any person or corporation to construct any extensions or erections from or contiguous to the water-line of said park, except with the consent of said Park Commissioners or said City of Boston: *provided, also,* that the City of Boston or said Park Commissioners shall build the said sea-wall, and fill and fit up the said grounds, during the five years from and after the passage of this act.

"SECT. 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

"[Approved, March 16, 1881.]"

Subsequent action was taken by the City Council as follows:—

"CITY OF BOSTON,
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Nov. 21, 1881.

"Ordered, That the City Treasurer be and he is hereby authorized to borrow, under the direction of the Committee on Finance, the sum of three hundred thousand dollars, the bonds or certificates of debt to be issued in negotiating this loan to be denominated 'The Public Park Loan,' and to bear such rate of interest as the Committee on Finance shall determine; and the Park Commissioners are hereby authorized to expend said sum for the taking in fee, by purchase or otherwise, for the purpose of a public park, lands to the amount of three hundred thousand dollars in assessed valuation, for the Charles River Embankment, between Craigie's and West Boston bridges. Passed: Yeas, 8; nays, 4. Sent down for concurrence. Dec. 22, came up concurred: Yeas, 53; nays, none. Approved by the Mayor, Dec. 24, 1881. A true copy. Attest: JOHN T. PRIEST, *Asst. City Clerk.*"

A petition is now before the Legislature for a transfer of the right of the Commonwealth in the flats necessary to extend the embankment, as planned by the Commissioners in their report of 1876, and therein described as follows :—

"Description."

"For the construction of this Embankment a sea-wall will be built on the water side to about the height of the existing one on the present Harbor Commissioners' line, and the enclosed space be filled by dredging the flats and otherwise, to about grade 17, making compensation for displacement of water by deepening the river-bed, as required by the said Commissioners.

"It will contain an area of about sixty-nine acres, and provide space for the building of a parkway mostly 200 feet in width, with a continuous water-front from Leverett Street to Cottage Farm bridge, nearly two and three-quarters miles in length, crossing but two highways, namely, Cambridge Street at West Boston bridge, and the extension of West Chester Park to the proposed new bridge across Charles River ; to be laid out with walks, drives, saddle-pads and boat-landings, and ornamented with shrubbery and turf.

"While interfering in the least possible degree with the ordinary traffic of the city, it will be accessible along its whole route at short intervals by streets already or to be built.

"Its northern section is near the oldest and most thickly settled part of the city, being less than a mile from North Square and from Main Street, Charlestown, via Prison Point and Leverett Street bridges, and within three-quarters of a mile of the City Hall.

"It will be a convenient and agreeable promenade during the summer for such citizens living in old Boston proper and Charlestown as are prevented by their occupations from going to more distant grounds. By means of landing stairs the river will be accessible for boating. The drive will be used for pleasure vehicles only.

"The preservation of water-fronts for pleasure-grounds is no novelty. The New York Battery, once the chief park of the city, and which was allowed to fall into disuse and neglect, has, within a few years, been rebuilt and improved, notwithstanding that Central Park, containing nearly one thousand acres, had in the mean time been created.

"The Charleston Battery, at the junction of the Ashley and Cooper rivers ; the old Fairmount Park, of Philadelphia, on the Schuylkill ; the Chicago Park, on Lake Michigan ; the

'Great Highway' (so called), to extend over three miles along the Pacific shore, at San Francisco, are well-known illustrations in this country.

"In European cities, water-front promenades are the rule rather than the exception, as, for instance, at Marseilles, Nice, and Naples, on the shores of the Mediterranean; at Florence, on the banks of the Arno; at Venice, on the Grand canal; at Geneva, on Lake Geneva; at Dresden, on the Elbe; at Hamburg, on the Alster; at Paris, on the Seine; at London, on the Thames; and in very many of the minor cities."

ARNOLD ARBORETUM.

After long consideration, and negotiations with Harvard College, and special reports upon the subject by the Commissioners and Committees of the City Council, the order to include the Arnold Arboretum in the system of parks of the City of Boston was passed in the following form:—

"CITY OF BOSTON,
"IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Dec. 27, 1881.

"Ordered, That the Park Commissioners of Boston be requested to take for the purposes of a public park, the land known as the Arnold Arboretum, and to purchase or take for the same purposes, land adjoining said arboretum, for an amount not exceeding sixty thousand dollars, paying therefor not more than twenty-five per cent. advance on the assessed value of A.D. 1880; and, also, said Commissioners are authorized to lease any portion of said arboretum when taken, or of said lands when taken or bought, and to enter into suitable covenants with the President and Fellows of Harvard College, in regard to any of such lands taken for a public park, substantially as set forth by said commissioners in their report, dated October 21, 1880, and printed as City Document No. 118 of said year.

"Provided that the estimated cost of all drive-ways called for under such arrangement shall not exceed the sum of seventy-five thousand dollars; also provided that before any covenant is made with the authorities of Harvard College, a set of rules and regulations, to govern the use of the grounds by the public, shall be drawn up, which shall receive the approval of the Mayor, the Park Commissioners, and the Corporation Counsel on the part of the City of Boston.

"Ordered, That the City Treasurer be and he hereby is authorized to borrow, under the direction of the Committee

on Finance, for the purchase or taking of lands for a public park in connection with the Arnold Arboretum, the sum of sixty thousand dollars, the bonds or certificates of debt to be issued in negotiating said loan to be denominated on the face thereof 'Public Park Loan,' and to bear such rate of interest as the Committee on Finance may determine; and the Park Commissioners are hereby authorized to expend said sum for the purpose aforesaid. Passed in Common Council: Yeas, 52; nays, none. Came up for concurrence. Read, and passed in concurrence: Yeas, 11; nays, 1. Approved by the Mayor, Dec. 28, 1881. A true copy. Attest: S. F. McCLEARY, *City Clerk.*"

WEST ROXBURY PARK.

In relation to this measure, the following action was taken by the City Council at the close of 1881:—

"CITY OF BOSTON,
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Nov. 7, 1881.

Ordered, That the City Treasurer be and he is hereby authorized to borrow, under direction of the Committee on Finance, the sum of six hundred thousand dollars, the bonds or certificates of debt to be issued in negotiating this loan to be denominated on the face thereof 'The Public Park Loan,' and to bear such rate of interest as the Committee on Finance shall determine; and the Park Commissioners are hereby authorized to expend said sum for the taking in fee, by purchase or otherwise, for the purpose of a public park, lands to the amount of six hundred thousand dollars, in assessed valuation, within the limits of the proposed West Roxbury park. Passed: Yeas, 10; nays, 2. Sent down for concurrence. Dec. 15, came up concurred: Yeas, 50; nays, 17. Approved by the Mayor, Dec. 16, 1881. A true copy. Attest: S. F. McCLEARY, *City Clerk.*"

CITY POINT BATTERY.

In regard to locating a marine park, or esplanade, at City Point, South Boston, as recommended by this Board in 1876, the City Council has taken the following action:—

"CITY OF BOSTON,
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Nov. 7, 1881.

Ordered, That the City Treasurer be and he is hereby authorized to borrow, under the direction of the Committee on Finance, the sum of one hundred thousand dollars, the

bonds or certificates of debt to be issued in negotiating this loan to be denominated on the face thereof 'The Public Park Loan,' and to bear such rate of interest as the Committee on Finance shall determine; and the Park Commissioners are hereby authorized to expend said sum for the taking in fee, by purchase or otherwise, for the purpose of a public park, lands to the amount of one hundred thousand dollars, in assessed valuation, for a marine park at City Point. Passed : Yeas, 9 ; nays, 3. Sent down for concurrence. Dec. 22, came up concurred : Yeas, 50 ; nays, 9. Approved by the Mayor, Dec. 24, 1881. A true copy. Attest : JOHN T. PRIEST, *Asst. City Clerk.*"

EAST BOSTON PARK.

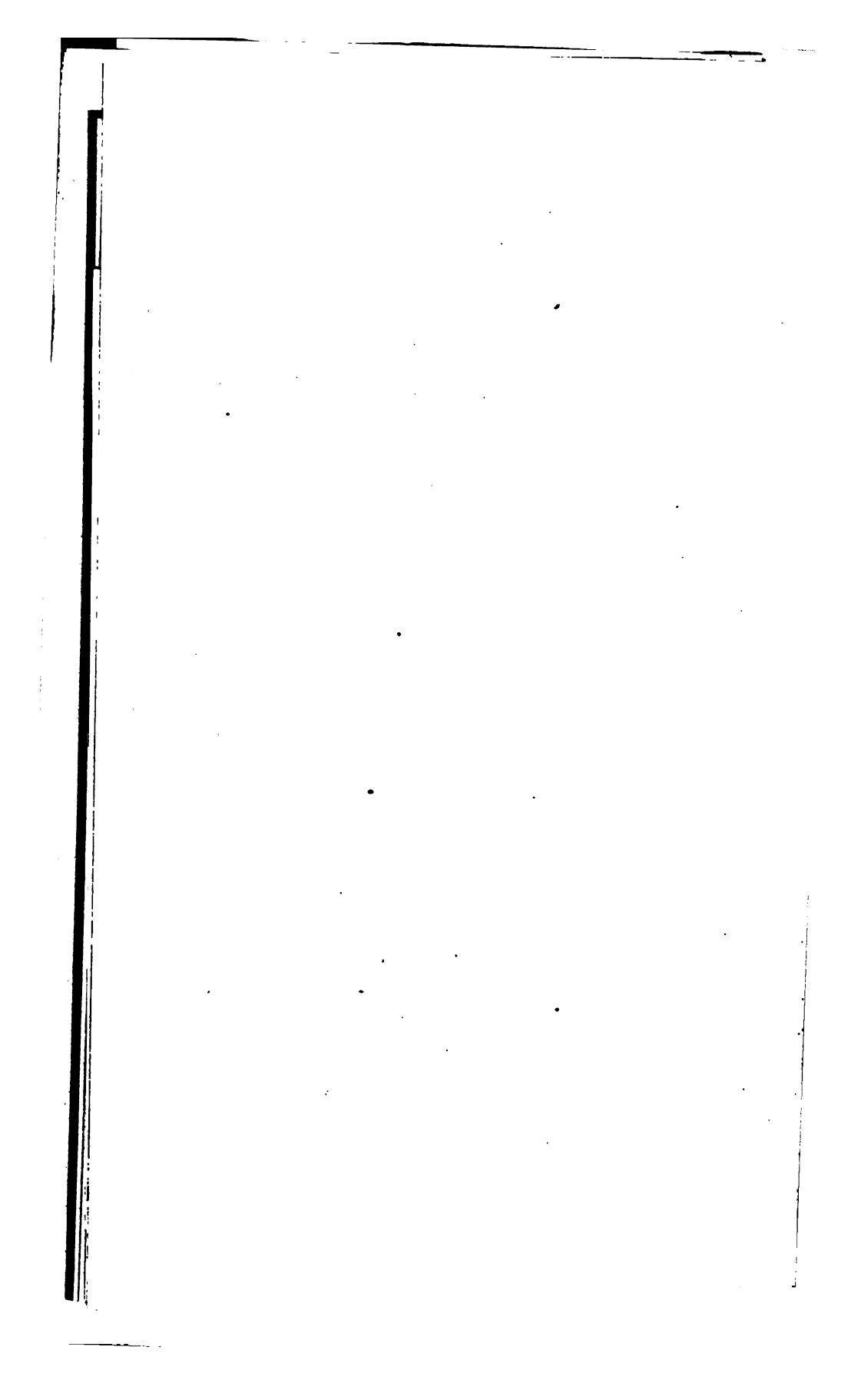
To provide a reservation for a park in East Boston, the following order was passed by the City Council :—

"CITY OF BOSTON,
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Nov. 7, 1881.

"Ordered, That the City Treasurer be and he is hereby authorized to borrow, under the direction of the Committee on Finance, the sum of fifty thousand dollars, the bonds or certificates of debt to be issued in negotiating this loan to be denominated on the face thereof 'The Public Park Loan,' and to bear such rate of interest as the Committee on Finance shall determine; and the Park Commissioners are hereby authorized to expend said sum for the taking in fee, by purchase or otherwise, for the purpose of a public park, land which shall be upland to the amount of fifty thousand dollars in assessed valuation for a public park in East Boston, in such available location as said Commissioners deem expedient. Passed: Yeas, 9 ; nays, 3. Sent down for concurrence. Dec. 22, came up concurred : Yeas, 50 ; nays, 6. Approved by the Mayor, Dec. 24, 1881. A true copy. Attest : JOHN T. PRIEST, *Asst. City Clerk.*"

BRIGHTON PARK.

The order for a loan of \$200,000 for the purchase of land within the limits of the proposed Brighton Park, after passing the last Board of Aldermen, failed of passage in the Common Council, and a new order was introduced which was referred to the new City Government.



land, chiefly unimproved, comprising 19½ acres, adjacent to the reservoir (and now surrounded by city property), as naturally forming parts of the reservoir grounds, and without which these grounds are incomplete. Should these lots be allowed to become occupied by structures, they would be a serious disfigurement to the neighboring park and reservoir drive, and would, doubtless, eventually be taken by the city at a greatly increased cost. They may properly be placed under the control of the Water Board.

"With these lots added, there will be, within the boundaries of the reservoir, an area of 231 acres of land and water (exclusive of Evergreen Cemetery), making, with Brighton Park, a total of 391 acres."

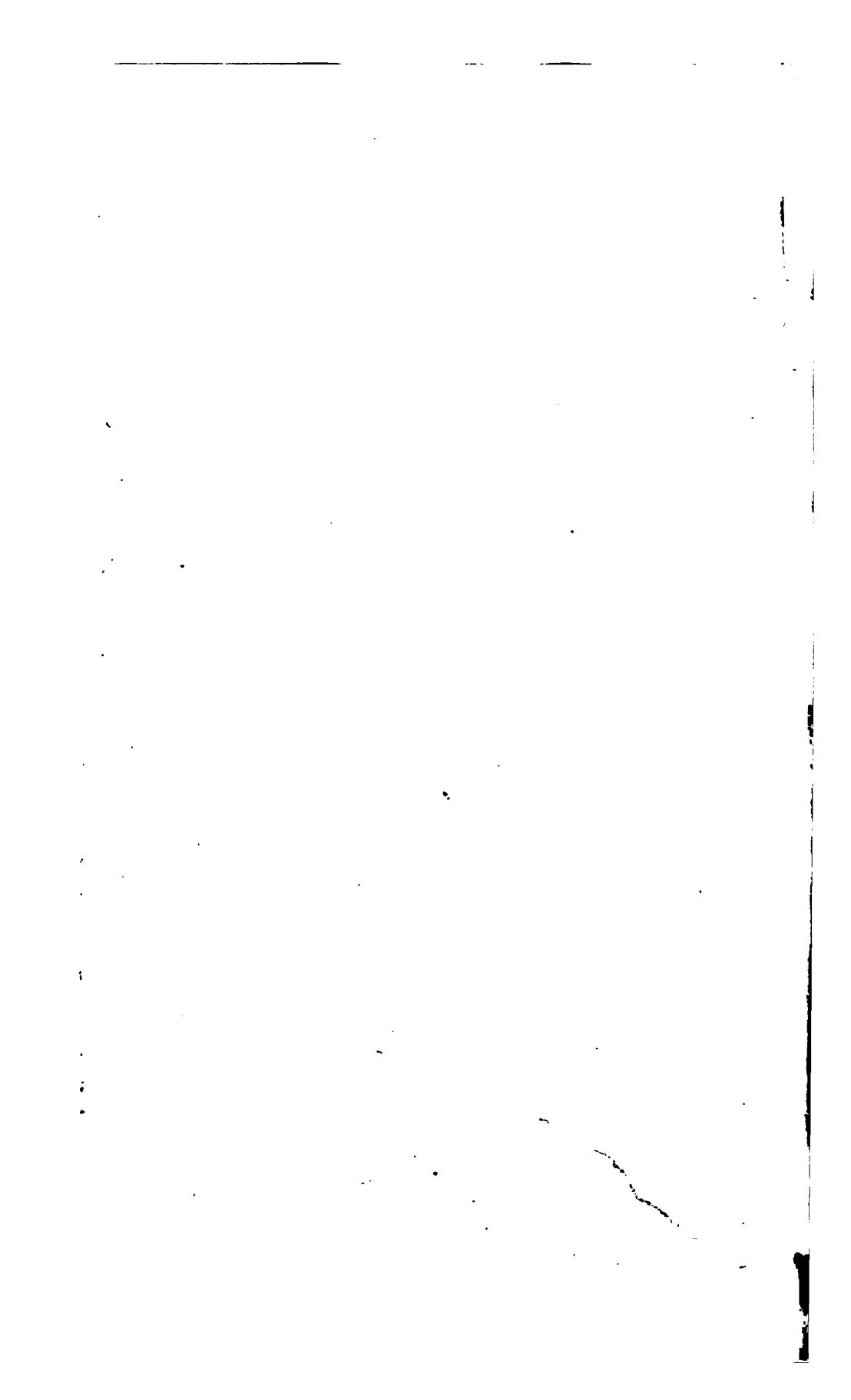
JAMAICA PARK.

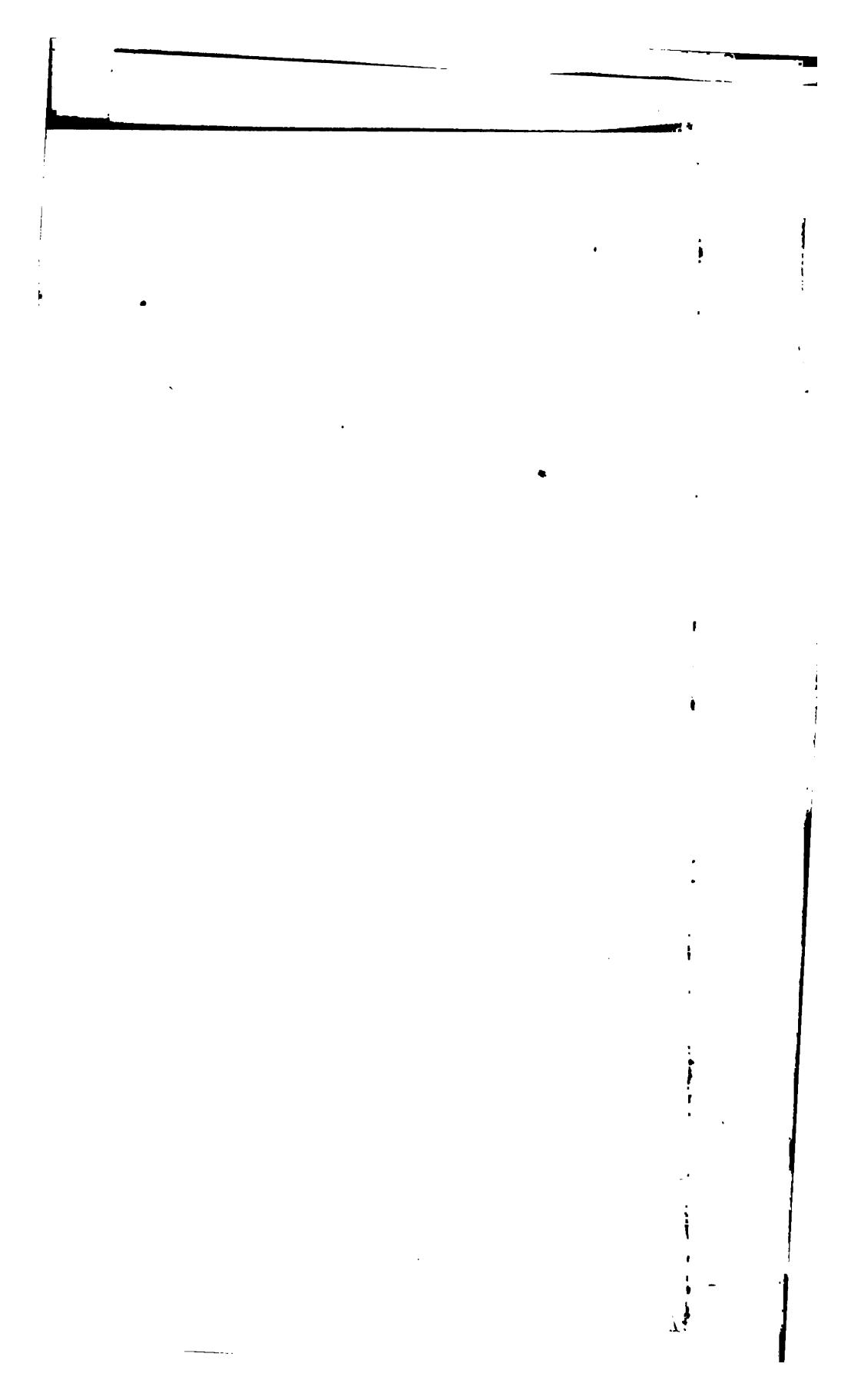
The Commissioners present with this report a map of the proposed extension of the park system in the direction recommended in their report of 1876. This includes the proposed Jamaica Park and parkways to the Arnold Arboretum and West Roxbury Park. Regarding the former the Commissioners say in their above-mentioned report as follows: —

Description.

"The area of Jamaica Park, including the pond of seventy acres, is one hundred and twenty-two acres. This beautiful lake is the only important sheet of fresh water within the city limits. For a short distance on its northerly and southerly side it is skirted by the highway, and from these points of view its beauty is familiar to the public. Its western shore is a somewhat steep hillside, well planted with trees and shrubbery, and mostly occupied at present by private dwellings, with their adjacent ornamental grounds, seriously disfigured, however, within a few years, by the erection of extensive ice-houses. Its eastern border is less bold, more irregular in outline, and at present occupied by private dwellings, with their lawns and shrubberies, and with some fine trees. The different characters of the opposite shores contrast well with each other. Unless the city takes possession of the entire shore, the rural character of the scenery will probably be hopelessly destroyed within a few years. As estates come into the market one after the other, the banks will be denuded of their present fine growth, and be replaced by unsightly ice-houses, with their adjuncts of







stables and tenements, by which the pure waters of the pond will be defiled, — dangers already threatened.

"The chance that this pond, situated in an extensive plain, with a range of high hills on three sides, in the midst of such a dense neighborhood as within a few years will exist around it, will become pestilential, and the certainty that, if defended and used as proposed, it will be of great sanitary advantage to the city, are considered to be conclusive reasons for this location. The Commissioners cannot too strongly urge the importance of early action in the premises in order to avert the danger and secure the benefit. The pond is a favorite resort of skaters in winter, and to a limited extent is used for boating in summer, and these will be encouraged and rendered more safe by police regulations. It lies between the four and four and one-half mile circles. Its chief approach from town will be by the Jamaica parkway [now Muddy River Improvement] which will skirt the eastern shore, while the western will be traversed by foot and saddle paths. Notwithstanding the comparatively large amount of improvements, in the form of dwellings, ice-houses, etc., upon this location, the Commissioners are of the opinion that the cost will be justified by the exceptional character of the park. It is recommended that Perkins Street be widened to 60 feet along the northern border of the pond. Jamaica Plain station, on the Providence Railroad, is five-eighths of a mile distant, and the Centre Street horse-car track is within one-sixth of a mile."

The Commissioners repeat their recommendations of 1876, and again urge the importance of early action in the premises.

THE PARK SYSTEM.

The maps of Back Bay Improvement and Arnold Arboretum, issued by this department in 1879, and of Muddy River Improvement in 1881, have been brought together upon one sheet to show their mutual relations, and their connection as a means of access from the heart of the city *via* the Common and Commonwealth Avenue to Jamaica Pond and the proposed West Roxbury Park. A report by Mr. Olmsted upon the subject follows: —

BOSTON, December 29, 1881.

CHARLES H. DALTON, Esq., *Chairman of the Park Commission:* —

SIR, — The Park system for Boston, advised by your Commission, though of smaller area than that of many other cities, differs from all others in the scope of its landscape design ; and this is, in part, due to topographical opportunities possessed by Boston, which, for the purpose in view, are probably unrivalled.

On the other hand, as my counsel has heretofore been asked by several other cities, when engaged with municipal problems of the same general class as that of which your proposed system is offered as a solution, it will not, I trust, be thought beyond my duty if I point to a circumstance which appears to me to be operating as yet not a little to the disadvantage of Boston.

It is that the Boston of to-day is largely made up of what were formerly a number of distinct local communities, each habituated to regard its public affairs from an independent point of view, and sometimes in a spirit of competition and jealousy toward the others. The larger part of Boston, territorially considered, has till lately been so divided. Possibly, also, the marked topographical divisions of the old city induced separate local interests in an unusual degree.

There is now a habit of looking upon the proposed parks of the city, each apart and independently of its relations to others of the system, as if it were to be of little value except to the people of the districts adjoining it. And this habit is so much evinced by intelligent and generally well-informed citizens that it must be supposed to be an inheritance from those older conditions. It presents a difficulty which should be contended with ; for, unquestionably, if it is maintained and allowed influence in legislation, it will be likely to nullify half the value to the city of the properties now proposed to be acquired for parks.

For example, a site has been selected at West Roxbury for a large park, because of the topographical advantages for a particular class of park purposes which nature has there provided. It is not uncommon to hear it referred to as if it were to be a special property of the West Roxbury community, and its chief value lie in what that community would gain from it. If this were just, the project would not be worthy of a moment's consideration. Moreover, if it were to be adopted and carried out in this limited spirit at the cost of the city, the people of the locality would not gain those

advantages from it that a wiser policy would have in view for them.

A site for a park to stand by itself and be little used except by those living near it should be a very different one from that for a park designed for more general use, and especially for a park which is to stand as one of a series. In the latter case the fitness of a site will largely be found in its adaptation to supply some form of park refreshment that others of the series are ill-adapted to supply or are naturally excluded from supplying. The qualities of a park which the West Roxbury site offers in generous measure at very moderate cost, could not, for example, be gained in a tenth part of that measure at ten times the cost on the proposed park-site near Chestnut Hill, — "Brighton Park," — or on any other which the city has had under consideration. But the converse is equally true; the Brighton site offers features of great interest, ready made, which could not be as well provided in the West Roxbury tract by an outlay in millions. Moreover, the attempt to introduce the more valuable qualities to be thus found at Brighton in the midst of those to be found at Roxbury, would be destructive of the latter, and any expense incurred for the purpose in behalf of the city would be much worse than wasted. In one word, the aim of design under the policy of the city which your Commission has been so long trying to establish, can only wisely be to develop qualities in each locality which will give it a more distinctive and grateful interest because of the development of quite other distinctive qualities elsewhere.

The accompanying map shows a series of sites which are now under consideration by the city government, and which your Commission has been authorized to purchase — if it shall be found possible to do so within fixed limits of price — together with the connections which are contemplated between them and by which they would, should the scheme be carried out, be tied to existing city properties.

It will be obvious at a glance, to any one having a superficial knowledge of the several localities named upon the map, that, if due advantage is taken of the distinctive capabilities of each and due respect paid to the distinctive limitations of each, the results to all concerned, of whatever part of the city resident, will be incomparably more interesting and valuable than they can possibly be under a policy such as seems to be commonly entertained of regarding each proposed park and parklet as an independent affair, deriving no interest from its relation to others, and imparting nothing of value to the interest of others.

Regarding the natural opportunities and limitations of the

several localities to be named below, it will be found that each will, through a judicious method of improvement, be adapted to induce a distinct impression ; and that, in each, the space to be applied to this impression is sufficient for the purpose, yet none too large to accomplish it with a determined avoidance of peep-show and theatrically scenic effects. While, except at West Roxbury, which is the one ground in the entire series to be with strict propriety called a park, the spaces to be taken are nowhere to be broad, the impressions which under judicious designing will be had in view are such as may be obtained within the limited scopes proposed.

The following is a memorandum which may suggest to any one looking at the map one or two of the more distinctive landscape qualities of the several locations mentioned, the note being in each case of the briefest, and intended only to give a slight lead to the imagination : —

MEMORANDUM.

The Common, Public Garden, and Commonwealth Ave. — Turf, trees, water, and other natural objects unnaturally arranged, but not in the main unpleasingly in consideration of the stately rows of buildings and other architectural and artificial objects with which they must stand associated, and the necessary thoroughfares passing among them.

Charles River Embankment. — Broad bay and river views with a rus-urban background seen from a stately promenade.

Back Bay. — Scenery of a winding, brackish creek, within wooded banks ; gaining interest from the meandering course of the water ; numerous points and coves softened in their outlines by thickets and with much delicate variety in tone and color through varied, and, in landscape art, novel, forms of perennial and herbaceous growths, the picturesque elements emphasized by a few necessary structures strong but unobtrusive.

Muddy River. — The natural sequence upon slightly higher ground to the last in following up a fresh-water course bordered by passages of rushy meadow and varied slopes from the adjoining upland ; trees in groups, diversified by thickets and open glades.

Upper Valley of Muddy River. — A chain of picturesque fresh-water ponds, alternating with attractive natural groves and meads, the uppermost of these ponds being —

Jamaica Pond, a natural sheet of water, with quiet, graceful shores, rear banks of varied elevation and contour, for the most part shaded by a fine natural forest-growth to be brought out overhangingly, darkening the water's edge and favoring great beauty in reflections and flickering half-lights. At conspicuous points numerous well-grown pines, happily massed, and picturesquely disposed.

The Arboretum. — (Independently of its imposed features.) Rocky hill-sides, partly wooded with numerous great trees, and a hanging-wood of hemlocks of great beauty. Eminences commanding distant prospects, in one direction seaward over the city, in the other across a charming country-side to blue distant hills.

West Roxbury Park. — Complete escape from the town. Open country. Pastoral scenery. A lovely dale gently winding between low wooded slopes, giving a broad expanse of unbroken turf, lost in the distance under scattered trees.

To the above, as constituent features of the sylvan system of Boston, as had in view by your Commission, are to be added two pieces of ground not shown in the present map; one commanding a close view of the lower harbor, and a distant outlook over the ocean; the other having grandeur of rocks with extraordinary beauty of form and tinting, and such interest of forest wildness as might be looked for in the midst of unpeopled mountains.

The above hint as to what may be ultimately hoped to result from the improvements in progress on the Back Bay, looks in a direction so diverse from that formerly entertained, and which seems still to be adhered to by many, that it will be right again to briefly characterize that undertaking, at present more prominently before the public than any other of the series.

The leading and only justifying purpose of the Back Bay Improvement, under the present design, is the abatement of a complicated nuisance, threatening soon to be a deadly peril to the whole city as a propagating and breeding-ground of pestilential epidemics. A second purpose is the reconciliation of convenient means of general public communication through the adjoining districts of the city with the means taken to accomplish the first purpose. A third purpose is

the dressing and embellishment of the banks, basins, bridges, and causeways, requisite under the first and second, suitably to the relation in which they will stand to the adjoining streets, and the improvements which it is the interest of the city that private enterprise should be encouraged to make upon them. A fourth purpose is to thriftily turn to account whatever shall be found requisite under the first, second, and third, as a distinctive incident, element, and feature in a general scheme of sylvan improvement for the city, looking to the development of local variety harmonizing in one comprehensive design. It may be observed that the continued application of the term *park* to an undertaking of the character thus indicated tends to perpetuate an unfortunate delusion, and to invite unjust expectations and criticisms.

A like fourfold purpose has controlled the selection of ground and the plan, as shown on the map, of the projected Muddy River Improvement. In general design, these two sections of the park system are one, the only division between the two being a concealed bar, which, in the Muddy River section, will permit fresh-water vegetation to be used along the water sides.

Respectfully submitted,

FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED,
Landscape Architect Advisory.

NEW LOANS.

In regard to the new loans authorized to be issued, and any which may hereafter be made to further extend the park system, it is, perhaps, well to know that these loans will be negotiated only as the money is called for to pay for lands purchased or taken; and, therefore, do not entail any expense upon the city for interest or sinking fund until the city is in possession and enjoyment of the park lands for which the loan is made.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES H. DALTON,
WILLIAM GRAY, JR.,
HENRY LEE.

Commissioners.

BOSTON, January 28, 1882.

granite masonry laid in mortar ; it is 7.67 feet wide at the bottom, and 4.6 feet wide at the top, and is capped with a coping of dressed granite 5 feet wide. The granite backing of this wall was obtained from an old retaining wall on the shore line.

The foundation generally was a plank platform supported on piles ; but for a distance of 420 feet the material was excavated to ledge, and split-granite masonry was used, laid without mortar. The wall was backed with ballast, and its front was filled to the grade of the top of the platform with gravel, and protected by ballast.

The elevation of the top of the coping is 15 feet, and of the top of the timber platform 1.92 feet above city base.

The greater part of the filling of the space between the sea-wall and Charles street has been done with gravel dredged from Charles river, above the West Boston bridge, it being a part of the work included in the before-mentioned contract, and the remainder is being obtained from the Health Department, the Court-House Commissioners, and various other sources.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAM JACKSON,
City Engineer.

150
Feb 4 1887

**STATUTES OF THE COMMONWEALTH AND ORDERS
OF THE CITY OF BOSTON CONCERNING PUBLIC
PARKS AND RELATED MATTERS.**

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

[CHAP. 178.]

In the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty-five.

**AN ACT TO LIMIT THE MUNICIPAL DEBT OF, AND THE RATE
OF TAXATION IN, THE CITY OF BOSTON.**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General
Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—*

SECTION 1. The taxes assessed on property in the city of Boston, exclusive of the State tax, and of the sums required by law to be raised on account of the city debt, shall not exceed in any year nine dollars on every one thousand dollars of the average of the assessors' valuations of the taxable property therein for the preceding five years, the valuation for each year being first reduced by the amount of all abatements allowed thereon previous to the thirty-first day of December in the year preceding said assessment. Any order or appropriation requiring a larger assessment than herein first above limited shall be void.

SECT. 2. The limit of indebtedness of the city of Boston shall hereafter be two and one-half per cent. up to and until the first day of January in the year eighteen hundred and eighty-seven, and thereafter shall be two per cent. on the average valuation prescribed in section one of this act, instead of three per cent. on the last preceding valuation, as provided in section four of chapter twenty-nine of the Public Statutes.

SECT. 3. Any court or justice having equity jurisdiction, sitting in the county of Suffolk, shall, upon the application of the Mayor or of ten taxable inhabitants of the city, at all times, whether in term time or vacation, have power to issue injunctions, manda-

tory or otherwise, decrees, or other process against the city council or otherwise, which such court or justice may think needful to enforce the provisions of this act or to prevent the violation thereof.

SECT. 4. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

[Approved April 17, 1885.]

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

[CHAP. 65.]

In the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty-six.

AN ACT EXTENDING THE TIME FOR THE COMPLETION OF
THE PUBLIC PARK IN THE CITY OF BOSTON, KNOWN AS
THE CHARLES RIVER EMBANKMENT.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

SECTION 1. The time within which the board of park commissioners of the city of Boston may build the sea-wall on the Boston side of the lower basin of Charles river, between Craigie's bridge and West Boston bridge, and may fill and fit up the grounds enclosed thereby for the purposes of a public park, as authorized by chapter ninety-two of the acts of the year eighteen hundred and eighty-one, and in accordance with the plans and specifications for said work heretofore duly approved and licensed by the board of harbor and land commissioners, is hereby extended one year, to wit: to the sixteenth day of March in the year eighteen hundred and eighty-seven.

SECT. 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

[Approved March 15, 1886.]

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

[CHAP. 184.]

In the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty-six.

AN ACT TO CHANGE A PORTION OF THE LINE OF THE SEA-WALL OF THE PUBLIC PARK IN THE CITY OF BOSTON, KNOWN AS THE CHARLES RIVER EMBANKMENT.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

SECTION 1. The ninety-second chapter of the acts of the year eighteen hundred and eighty-one, entitled "An Act in addition to An Act for the laying out of public parks in or near the city of Boston," is hereby so far amended that the sea-wall therein authorized on the Boston side of Charles river between Craigie's and West Boston bridges, may be built on or within the following lines instead of those defined in said act, namely: Beginning at a point on the southerly side of Craigie's bridge distant two hundred feet perpendicularly from the westerly line of Charles street, and running thence southerly in a line parallel to said westerly line of Charles street to a point opposite the first angle in said street; thence turning a similar angle and running southerly in a straight line parallel to and two hundred feet distant perpendicularly from the westerly line of the next adjoining section of said Charles street, and extending in the same course to West Boston bridge.

SECT. 2. All of the other provisions of the act aforesaid shall apply to the lines and areas defined by this act, subject to the extension of time granted by chapter sixty-five of the acts of the present year for the completion of said sea-wall and other authorized work.

SECT. 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

[Approved April 9, 1886.]

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

[CHAP. 199.]

In the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty-six.

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY OF BOSTON TO PURCHASE THE PROPERTY OF THE JAMAICA POND AQUEDUCT CORPORATION.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

SECTION 1. The city of Boston, by the Boston water board, may purchase and hold all the property, estates, rights and privileges of the Jamaica Pond Aqueduct Corporation, incorporated by chapter one hundred and thirty-five of the acts of the year eighteen hundred and fifty-seven, and said Boston water board may, if the same shall be deemed expedient, connect Jamaica Pond and the pipes of said corporation so purchased with the other water-pipes of said city; but said city shall not hereby acquire any right to take ice from said pond, or to take land upon which any building or machinery is now erected, or which is now used in connection with such building or machinery for the purpose of storing ice, or for convenience in cutting, storing and moving ice, without the consent of the owner of said land and buildings or machinery; nor shall said city, by virtue of this act or by the purchase hereunder authorized, acquire any right to obstruct or in any manner interfere with the business of persons or corporations now engaged in cutting, storing, selling or moving ice from said pond, or with the rights of any other person or corporation in the water or ice of said pond, or in the lands bordering upon the same, except so far as the same shall be necessary, in raising or lowering the surface of the water of said pond, to the extent, or in protecting and preserving the purity of said waters, in the manner now authorized by law.

SECT. 2. This act shall not become valid until it has been accepted by the city council of the city of Boston, by a vote of two-thirds of the members of both branches thereof.

[Approved May 7, 1886.]

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

[CHAP. 304.]

*In the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty-six.*AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE A LOAN FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF
PUBLIC PARKS IN OR NEAR THE CITY OF BOSTON.*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—*

SECTION 1. For the purpose of defraying the costs and expenses of constructing the parks established by the city of Boston, the city council of said city may, by a vote passed in the manner provided by section seven of chapter twenty-nine of the Public Statutes, authorize its treasurer to issue, from time to time, to the amount of five hundred thousand dollars each year, and to a total amount not exceeding two million five hundred thousand dollars, negotiable bonds or certificates of indebtedness, payable in not exceeding fifty years from their date and bearing interest at a rate not exceeding four per cent. per annum, to be denominated, on the face thereof, Public Park Construction Loan.

SECT. 2. Said treasurer shall sell said bonds and certificates, or any part thereof, from time to time, and retain the proceeds thereof in the treasury of the said city, and pay therefrom the expenses incurred for the purposes aforesaid.

SECT. 3. Upon the passage of the said vote the board of park commissioners of said city shall without delay proceed with the construction of said parks, and shall carefully and judiciously expend the amounts aforesaid in such construction.

SECT. 4. The debt and loans authorized by this act shall not be included within the limit fixed by section two of chapter one hundred and seventy-eight of the acts of the year eighteen hundred and eighty-five.

SECT. 5. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

[Approved June 21, 1886.]

CITY OF BOSTON,
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, June 1, 1886.

Ordered, That the Board of Park Commissioners be authorized to sell at public auction buildings or structures of any kind standing upon lands purchased or taken for park purposes, the proceeds thereof, and the proceeds from the sale of grass and wood from said lands, to be appropriated to the expenses incident to the care and maintenance of the public parks ; and the Auditor is hereby authorized to allow payment from said moneys for such expenses upon the requisition of said Board.

Passed : Yeas, 11 ; nays, none. Sent down for concurrence.
June 3, came up concurred : Yeas, 59 ; nays, none.

Approved by the Mayor, June 5, 1886.

CITY OF BOSTON,
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Sept. 27, 1886.

Ordered, That the Board of Park Commissioners be authorized to sell at public auction all old material in their possession not required for the use of the department, the proceeds thereof to be appropriated to the expenses incident to the care and management of the public parks ; and the City Auditor is hereby authorized to allow payment from the said proceeds for such expenses, upon the requisition of said Board.

Passed : Yeas, 12. Sent down for concurrence. Oct. 21, came up concurred : Yeas, 55 ; nays, none.

Approved by the Mayor, Oct. 23, 1886.

CITY OF BOSTON,
IN COMMON COUNCIL, Nov. 11, 1886.

Ordered, That all claims for reduction or abatement of assessments on account of the locating and laying out of the public parks be referred to the Joint Standing Committee on Claims, who shall consult the City Solicitor and report such settlements as they consider just and equitable.

Passed. Came up for concurrence. Concurred, Nov. 15.

Approved by the Mayor, Nov. 16, 1886.

CITY OF BOSTON,
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Dec. 15, 1886.

Ordered, That in the several suits for abatement of the Franklin Park betterment assessments, the city solicitor be and he hereby is authorized to consent to judgment abating said assessments to an amount equal to ninety-five per cent. of the amount assessed, but in each case without costs and without interest.

Passed. Sent down for concurrence. Dec. 16, came up concurred.

Approved by the Mayor, Dec. 20, 1886.

CITY OF BOSTON,
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Dec. 27, 1886.

Ordered, That the City Auditor be authorized to transfer from the appropriation for Franklin Park the sum of twenty-three thousand (23,000) dollars, said sum to be set aside for the purchase of additional land for Franklin Park.

Passed : Yeas, 11 ; nays, 1. Sent down for concurrence. Dec. 30, came up concurred : Yeas, 59 ; nays, 3.

Approved by the Mayor, Jan. 1, 1887.

CITY OF BOSTON,
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Dec. 27, 1886.

Ordered, That the Board of Park Commissioners be hereby authorized to purchase of William S. and George W. Bond, for park purposes, a parcel of land containing 81,090 square feet, more or less, and situated at the corner of Sigourney and Walnut streets; the expense thus incurred not to exceed the sum of twenty-three thousand dollars, and to be charged to a special appropriation for the purchase of additional land for Franklin Park, on condition that the said purchase shall not in any way relieve the said William S. and George W. Bond from their obligation to pay the betterment assessed upon said land on account of the laying out of Franklin Park, and also the taxes assessed thereon for the year 1886.

Passed. Sent down for concurrence. Dec. 30, came up concurred.

Approved by the Mayor, Jan. 1, 1887

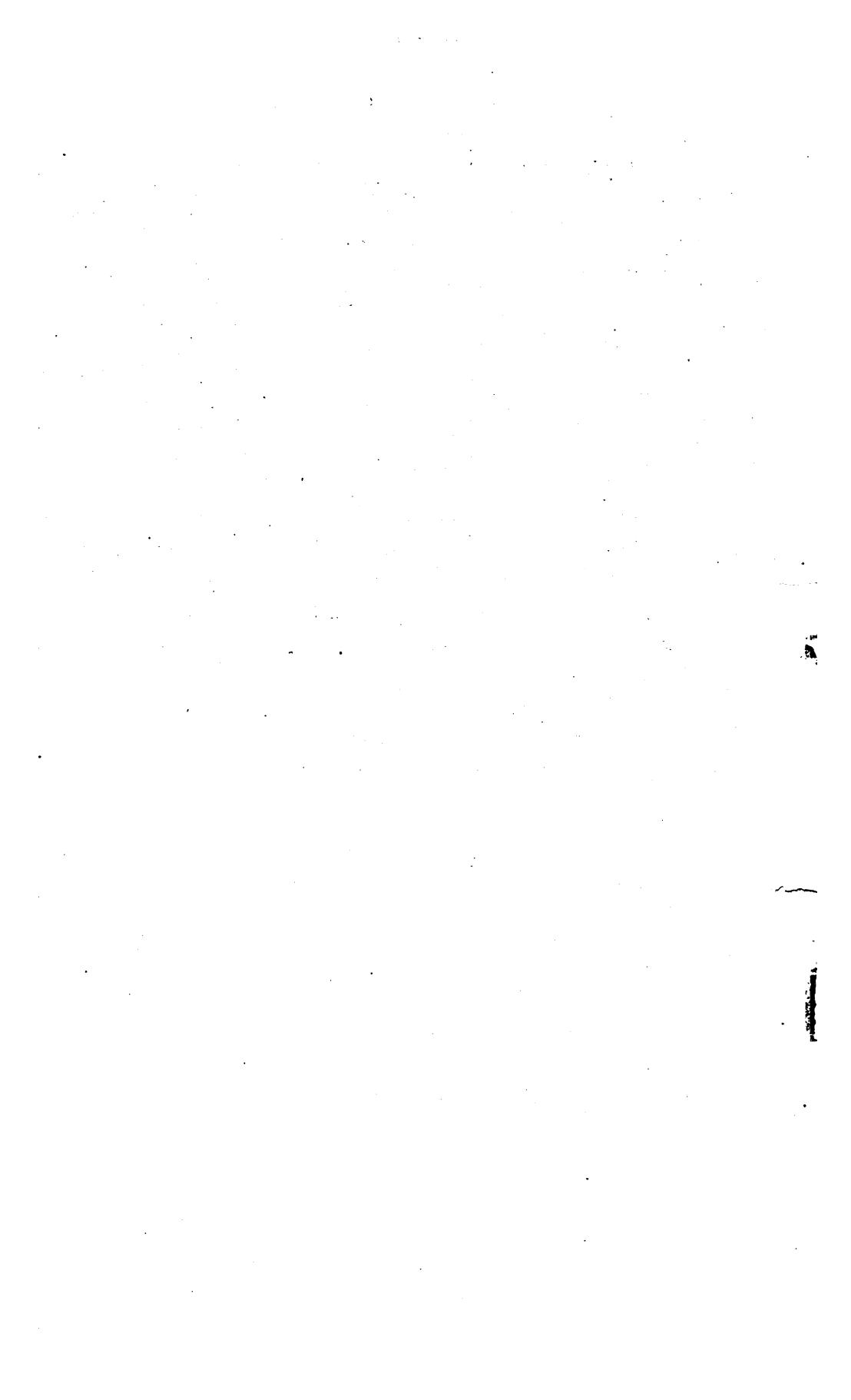
CITY OF BOSTON,
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, Jan. 3, 1887.

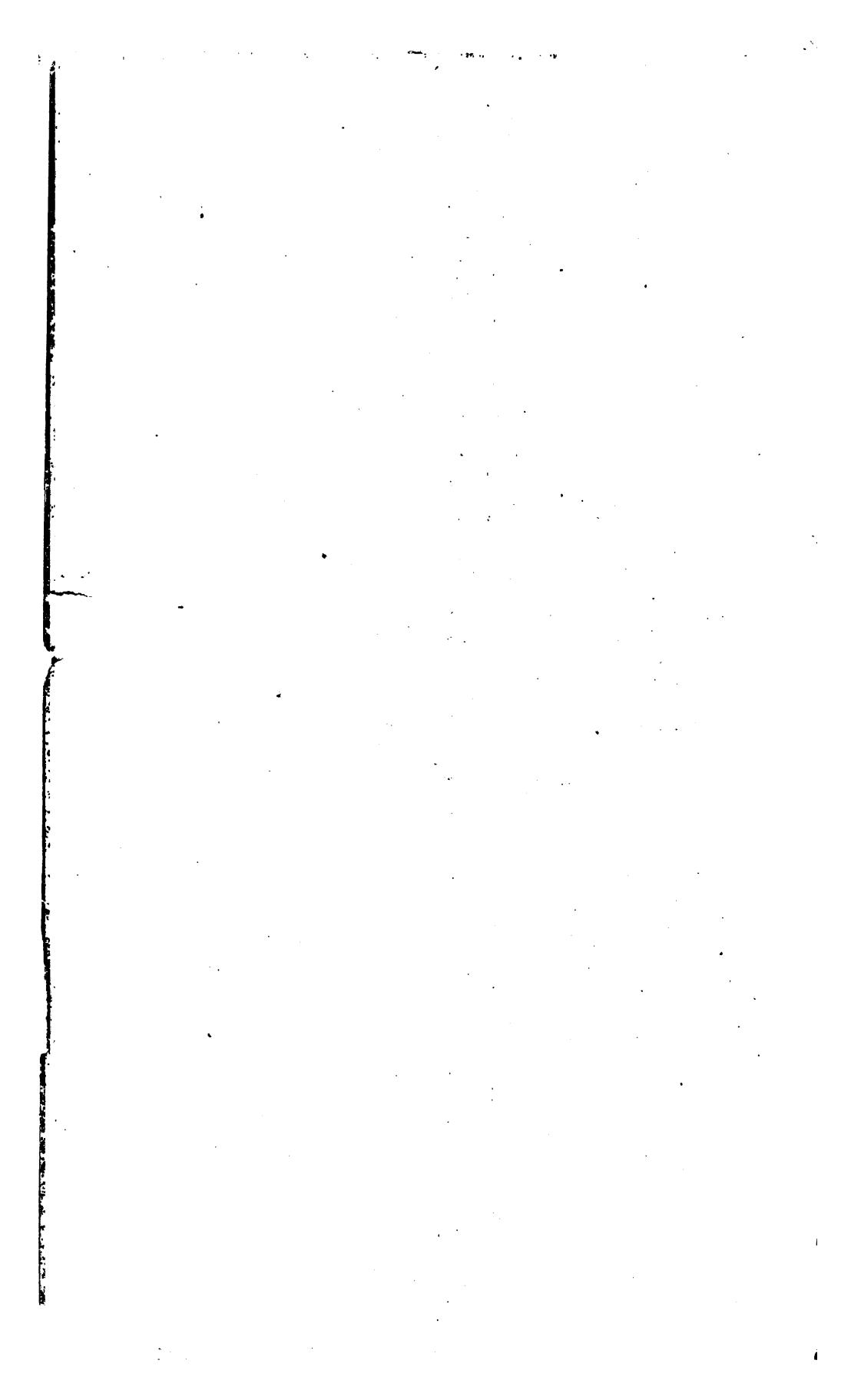
Ordered, That, for the purpose of defraying the costs and expenses of constructing the parks established by the City of Boston, the City Treasurer is hereby authorized to issue from time to time, to the amount of \$500,000 each year, and to a total amount not exceeding \$2,500,000, negotiable bonds or certificates of indebtedness, payable in 50 years from their date, and bearing interest at a rate not exceeding 3 per cent. per annum, to be denominated, on the face thereof, "Public Park Construction Loan."

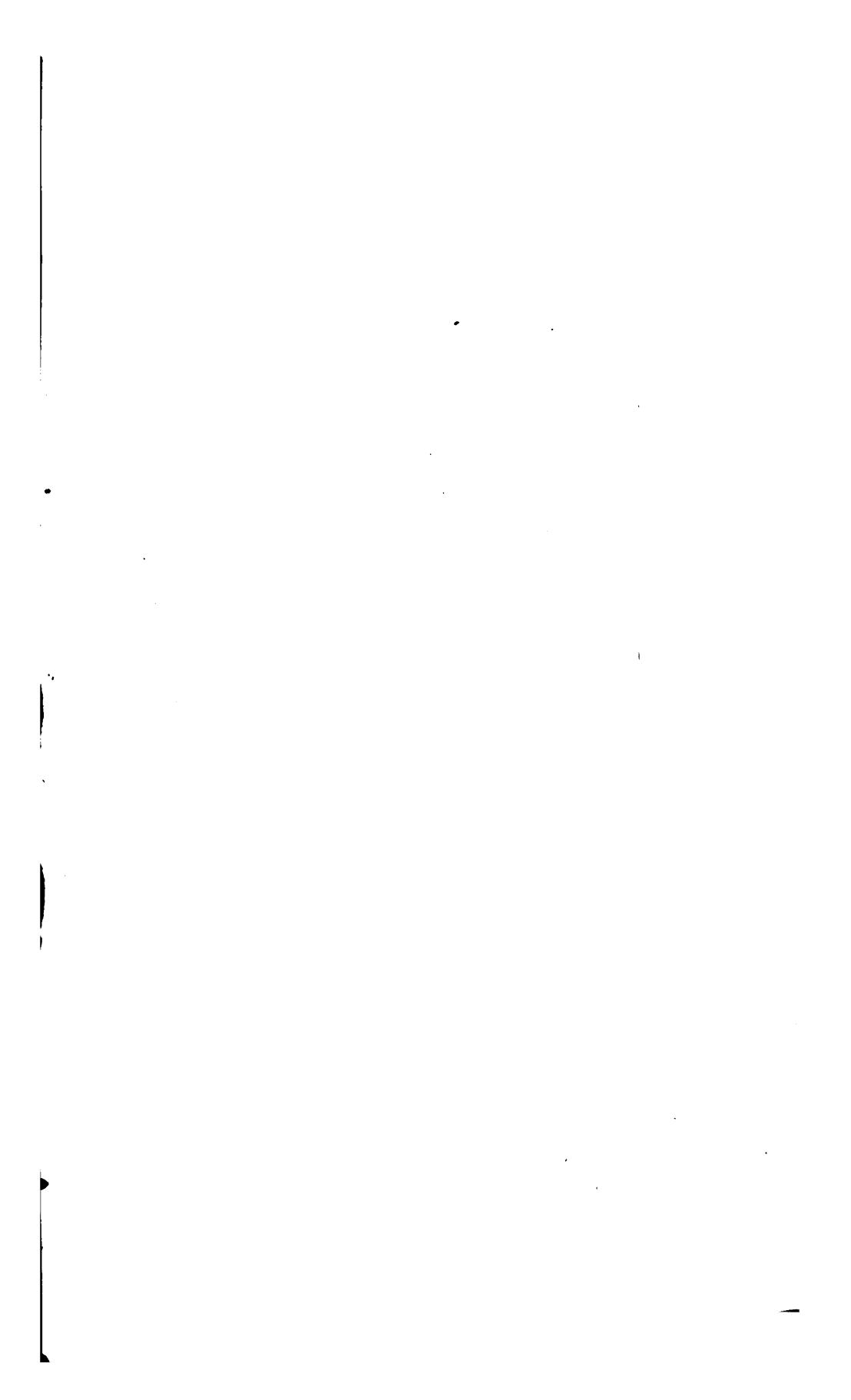
Passed, all rules of the Board and all joint rules having been first suspended: Yeas, 9; nays, 3. Sent down for concurrence. Came up concurred, all joint and Common Council rules being first suspended: Yeas, 49; nays, 17.

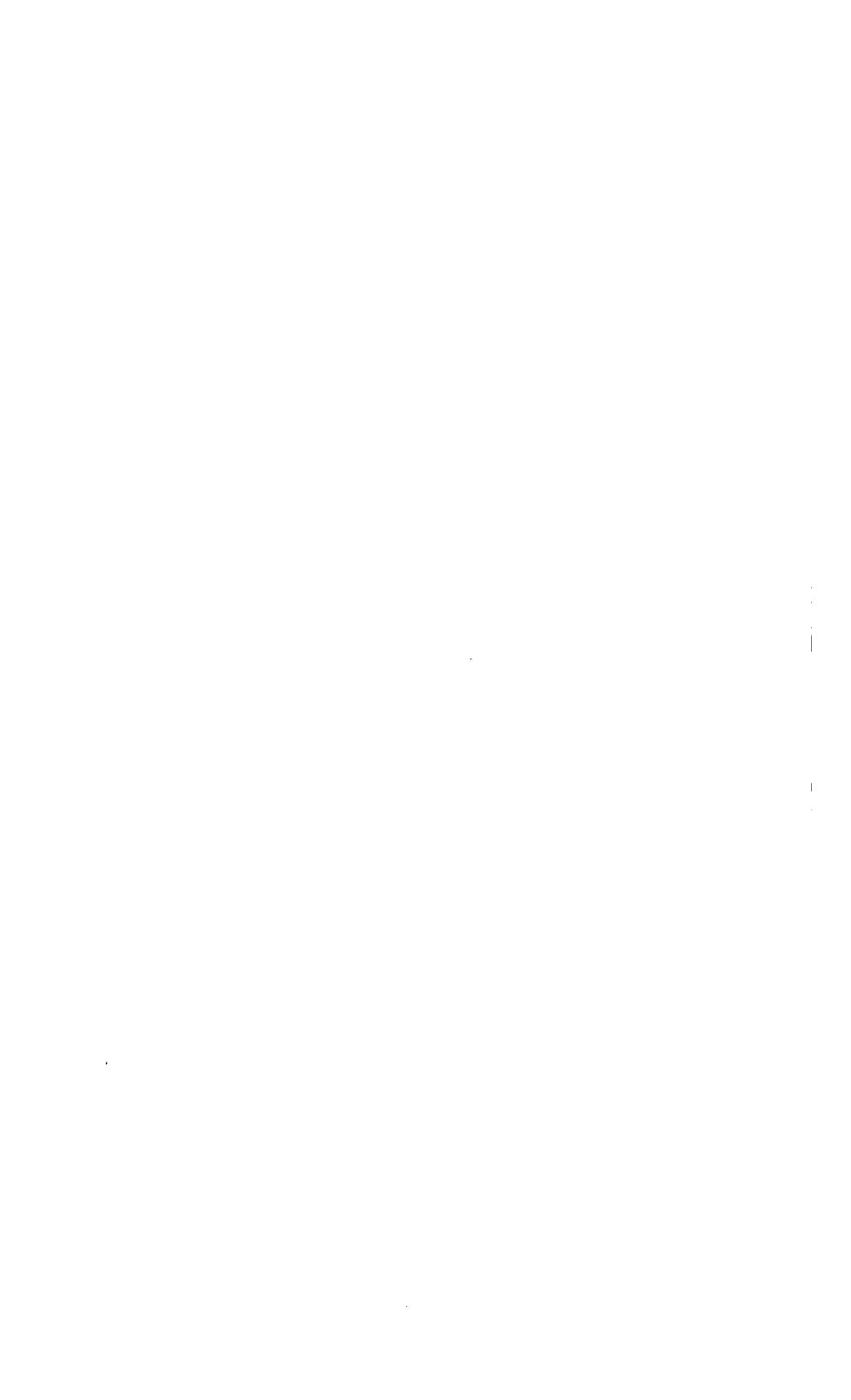
Approved by the Mayor, Jan. 4, 1887.

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